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SEVEN YEARS
OF THE
KING'S THEATRE.

BY

JOHN EBERS,

LATE MANAGER OF THE KING'S THEATRE IN THE HAYMARKET.

LONDON :
WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH,
OLD BOND-STREET.

MDCCCXXVIII.

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SEVEN YEARS

KING'S THEATRE

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1847

TO THE
COUNTESS ST. ANTONIO.

MADAM,

IN presenting to the public this Sketch of Seven Years of the King's Theatre, I have ventured to prefix to it the name of your Ladyship.

The beautiful music of Italy has received so much of your Ladyship's attention, that I know not to whom this portion of the History of an Establishment devoted to its cultivation, can with more propriety be inscribed.

I dedicate it to your Ladyship,

And remain,

MADAM,

With the greatest respect,

Your Ladyship's very obliged,

And devoted Servant,

JOHN EBERS.

WATSON'S AT ANTONIO

IV. I have presented to the public this sketch of
the work of the King's Theatre, I have ventured
to inscribe to it the name of your Ladyship.
The beautiful music of Italy has received so
much of your Ladyship's attention, that I know not
to whom this portion of the History of an Italian
Theatre devoted to its cultivation, can with more
propriety be inscribed.

I dedicate it to your Ladyship.

And remain,

MADAM,

With the greatest respect,

Your Ladyship's very obliged,

And devoted servant,

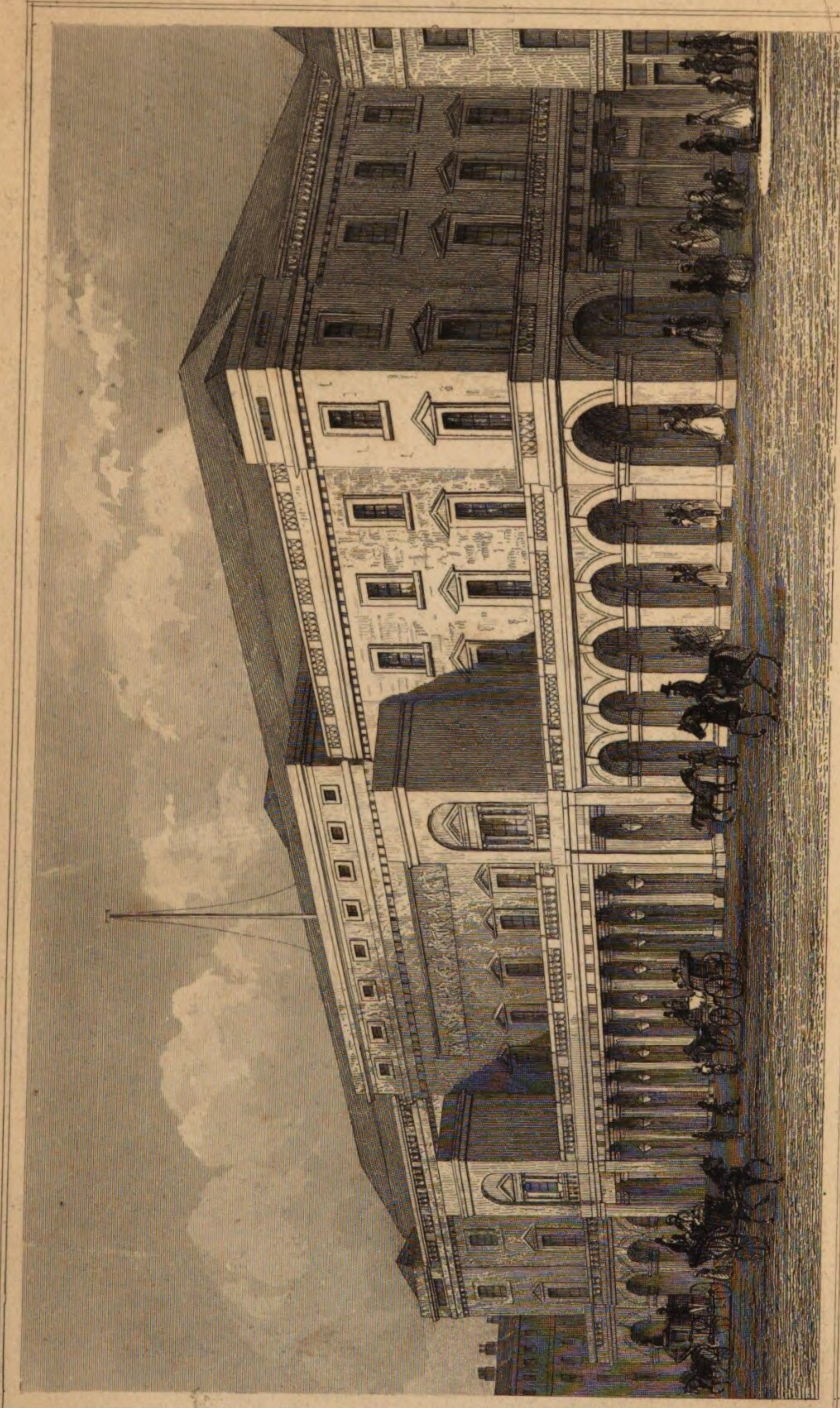
John Harris.



Painted by M. W. Sharp.

Engraved by Robt. Cooper.

MAD^{LE} NOBLET
in Cendrillon.



H. I. MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

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ERRATA.

Page 5, line 3 from bottom, *for* Thomas *read* William.

Page 27, line 5 from bottom, and page 28, line 7 from top, *for* Ladd *read* Lad.

Page 52, line 6 from bottom, *for* Fatima *read* Fiorilla.

Page 172, line 10 from bottom, *for* 250 *read* 450.

PREFACE.

THE Volume now submitted to the Public contains a sketch of the History of the King's Theatre during the period of my connection with that establishment, comprising the seasons of 1821—1827, and the intervening years.

I have been in the management of the Opera House during the period before adverted to, with the exception of the year 1824, when the Theatre was held by Mr. Benelli ; but as I also became involved in the concerns of that year, the exception can hardly be considered such. I am, therefore, capable of stating the actual business of the Theatre during that period ; what was

its success, what its misfortunes; what the exertions made to sustain its character and efficiency, and what was the result up to the time when my connection with it ceased.

To do this, and no more, is what I have undertaken in the present publication. I have endeavoured to accomplish this object with accuracy; but the multiplicity of transactions in which, as Manager, I have been engaged, may have obliterated from my memory the recollection of some things, and weakened or confused that of others. Unintentional errors may, therefore, have crept into the following pages; but I trust that they will be found neither numerous nor important.

In submitting a work to the public, an author has in view to gain favour either

by contributing to the amusement or the information of his readers. The latter is the primary object of this volume ; and it will be a source of satisfaction to me if the former shall be found to be in any degree blended with it.

It would not, certainly, have been difficult for me to render the work one of amusement, had I, in pursuit of this object, thought proper to disregard the feelings of those to whom it would be unpleasant to have their names or the names of friends dragged into publicity. There are cases where individuals so place themselves in prominent and observable stations as to become public property ; but a private individual has reason to complain of being, without his own concurrence, placed before the public, and his actions and motives made the subject

of general comment. Upon this principle I have endeavoured to act, and am the less inclined to regret having done so, because I do not perceive that the omissions made in conformity with it at all diminish the information which it is my object to convey on the affairs of the King's Theatre.

A simple detail, then, of the transactions of the Opera, gathered from my own recollections, and the few collateral sources of information which I have found open to me, is what I profess to offer; and, though I have not wished to secure for these pages a temporary and factitious popularity, by embodying in them anecdotes and memorials which might be personally offensive, I trust that the general desire of information on the topic to which they are devoted, will render acceptable the plain and connected account which is intended to be given.

I am well aware that much information touching the Opera is already in possession of the public ; but the current accounts are so loose and imperfect, and contain such a mixture of truth and falsehood, that it becomes the more desirable to all who feel interest in the subject, to be furnished with a statement in which, however little may be found entirely novel, every thing of importance may be relied on as accurate.

A brief retrospect of the concerns of the Theatre previous to the period of which this volume treats, at least so far as to explain more clearly the state of the concern at the commencement of that period, seemed desirable, and has, therefore, formed the subject of the first chapter.

In considering the history of this Theatre, it is an obvious question, and one which

has been often asked, what have been the causes of the uniform failure which has hitherto attended the endeavours of its Managers? for the experience of Handel and Heidegger afforded results little different from that of Taylor and Waters. Why, when the price of admission to the Opera is higher than to any other of the theatres, and the gross receipts certainly of no mean amount, is it found that the expenditure almost always preponderates, and that ruin or immense loss is the fate of the enterprizer?

I confess myself unable to give any satisfactory answer to this question, as a general one. As relates to my own experience, the answer will be partly found in the following pages. The expenses of my earlier seasons arose, in some measure, from my want of

knowledge in the details of my situation ; and, perhaps, also, a wish, imprudently indulged, to accomplish too much. The losses of the latter part of the period of my undertaking are chiefly or entirely attributable to the overwhelming rent with which the Theatre was charged. That the Lessors of the Theatre are sensible of having over-rated the value of the property may be concluded from the fact of its being now let for little more than half the rent at which I took it during the last two years of my holding it. The present moderate rent will enable the Managers, I trust, to guard themselves from loss, and, at the same time, to mount the operas and ballets in a manner that will give satisfaction to the subscribers and the public.

As a security against the fluctuation in

the receipts, it has been suggested, that the Continental plan should be adopted, by the King's Theatre being taken under the immediate protection of the Government, and aided by its support and guarantee. This would do much towards the improvement of the Opera; the Manager would have less to fear in making important engagements; and those engagements would be completed on more favourable terms, because the security of their fulfilment on the part of the Theatre would be perfect. The performers could also be engaged for longer periods, an advantage which I have adverted to in another place. An individual will not sacrifice an opportunity of making an engagement abroad for a term of years, to accept one for a single season at London; and a yearly lessee can, of course, offer engagements for no longer period.

It is very doubtful, however, whether the tone of society and the institutions of this country are such as to render it advisable, or even practicable, to make a theatre, in any measure, a state establishment. The interference of government with the amusements of the people would not fail to be encountered with objections, in a country where all the operations of power are regarded with so much jealousy as in England. The spirit of restraint is so ungrateful to this people, that any measure, though beneficial, which should place the theatres under such a system of intendancy as prevails abroad, and which appears a necessary accompaniment of the support to be granted by the government, would be anything but popular.

Some of the difficulties removed by such

superintendence, might be equally avoided, by the management and ownership of the theatre being, as in former cases, united in the same individual; the performers, for instance, might be engaged for any length of time that might be thought convenient. But the security of payment, a point which all performers, of course, consider in making engagements, would be no greater than in the case of a lessee, nor perhaps equal. Besides, it is not often that an individual qualified for the successful management of the King's Theatre, can command a capital sufficient for its purchase; and whoever was able would hesitate before he ventured to embark such a sum in so precarious an undertaking: and hitherto the owners, who have also been the managers, of the King's Theatre, have been unsuccessful.

Two plans mentioned in this work to have been in agitation, within the year ensuing Mr. Waters's abandonment of the concern, may deserve to be considered.

One of these is the purchase of the Opera House by the individual who also intends to conduct the management; the purchase-money being furnished by such of the nobility and gentry as may be inclined to advance the necessary sums, on the security of the property; and on the supposition that the number of such mortgagees would be numerous, the sum advanced by each need not be considerable. If this plan were adopted, the purchaser and manager must be exempted from all personal responsibility to the mortgagees, who must depend on the property alone for the security of the money advanced: were it otherwise, the influence

of the individuals composing such a numerous body, not acting in concert, would effectually discompose the best concerted scheme of management. The manager would, however, be solely responsible for the fulfilment of the engagements with performers, and all the expenses of the theatre.

The other, and, as it appears to the writer, better plan, is that of an incorporated body of proprietors, having their powers and responsibilities regulated by Act of Parliament. This plan would probably be found to remove the chief difficulties attached to the others which have been tried or proposed, as tending to effect the permanency and security of the management, the main object in view. Or, if the obtaining of the Act should be found imprac-

ticable, a guarantee fund might be raised on a principle similar to that on which the musical festivals, given in the country, are secured.

It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge on these hints, and might here be considered irrelevant. It is desirable that some additional stability should be given to the Opera, as the peculiar place of resort of classes whose residence it is an object to secure in their own country; an end best attainable by diminishing the inducements to seek elsewhere for those amusements which a correct and cultivated taste requires.

It is not reasonably to be expected that, with the comparative advantages enjoyed by the foreign theatres, the Opera, as established in England, should attain the desirable perfection. It is objected (correctly

as to the facts, though not so as to the inference thence deduced), that the continental theatres of music exhibit better performances than our own, and at a less price. The causes of the superiority of the exhibitions at these theatres have already been hinted at, and the moderate price of admission results from the assistance afforded by the governments; it being notorious that the receipts never come near the amount of the expenditure, the deficiency being supplied from the national funds. Another cause of the inferiority of our performances, is one which involves a point in our favour, namely, the more frequent novelties introduced here. One or two operas suffice an Italian audience for a season, whence they are capable of being mounted and brought forward with the perfection consequent upon

long preparation and repeated rehearsals. Velluti, on his arrival here, being accustomed to the careful and gradual getting up of the operas in his own country, could not be reconciled to the more rapid preparations of the King's Theatre, and strained every nerve in getting up 'Il Crociato in Egitto' within the period limited for the completion of the arrangements, without being at last satisfied with the time and labour devoted to them.

It may possibly be thought that the style of the work is too egotistical, and that the writer, his views, and his feelings, are too frequently introduced to the reader; but this it was difficult to avoid, in treating of a subject in which the author has been so deeply interested, and which engrossed the business of his life during the period of his connection with it.

I am attached to the Opera from habit as well as from inclination, and should be unwilling to abandon it without some memorial, however slight or imperfect, of its concerns whilst under my superintendence. I entered on its management, not altogether willingly, but at the same time with zeal perhaps too great in comparison with the degree of my competency for the undertaking; and the experience since acquired has ripened too late to enable me to profit by it. I have no wish to conceal or extenuate any errors imputable to my management; I wish only for a fair and candid construction of my exertions to secure the success of the establishment while under my care.

SEVEN YEARS
OF THE
KING'S THEATRE.

CHAPTER I.

Retrospective View of Affairs of the King's Theatre, since 1788.

—Mr. Taylor.—Mr. Goold's purchase—His Death.—Mr. Waters.—Disputes between Mr. Taylor and Mr. Waters.—Chancery Suit.—The House closed.—Petition to the Prince Regent.—Re-opening of the House under Mr. Waters.—Management by him.—His departure from England, and termination of the season of 1820.

THE troubles and difficulties in which the King's Theatre has for so many years been involved, are so generally, and at the same time so imperfectly known, that a connected sketch of the whole may convey, to most readers, a more definite knowledge than they have hitherto possessed of the situation of the affairs of the theatre. It will also introduce the circumstances preceding and

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

CHAP. I. immediately connected with my interest in
1789—
1820. the Opera.

The performance of operas had for many years been continued at the Theatre or Opera house, in the Haymarket, when the structure was unfortunately destroyed by fire, in the month of June 1789. In consequence of this accident, the Opera was transferred, first, to the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, and subsequently to the Pantheon, which was licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, and opened under the management of Mr. O'Reilly.

During this interval, Mr. Taylor, the proprietor of the Old Opera House, exerted himself so successfully in expediting its rebuilding, that the foundation of the new erection was laid early in 1790. The Earl of Buckinghamshire, a great lover and supporter of the opera, officiated in laying the first stone of the building, which was completed, so rapidly were the operations con-

ducted, in less than a year from the com-
mencement.

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The circumstance I am going to mention may not be misplaced here, as illustrative of the character of Mr. Taylor—one of the most singular of mankind.

A party of friends, with whom this humourist had been dining, had, by well-timed raillery, driven him to invite them to breakfast, on the morning of the day appointed for laying the foundation of the new theatre. Determined to enjoy a joke at the expense of his friends, and at the same time to be reimbursed for his breakfast, he wrote a note in the name of a common friend, to each of the gentlemen who had engaged themselves, to partake of his *déjeuner*. The billet informed them, that the supposed writer had learned that Taylor intended to practise a joke on his visitors, by setting them down to empty dishes, and recommending them to turn the tables on him, by taking, each man,

CHAP. I. his provision with him, and upbraiding their
1789—
1820. host with his narrow conduct. The advice
was followed by the guests to a man, every one sending or taking in his carriage a supply of provisions, more than adequate to his own wants, and the whole number rejoicing in the confusion with which Taylor would, as they expected, be overwhelmed. Their astonishment was considerable, when, on entering the breakfast-room, with half-suppressed laughter at the anticipated joke, they found the tables set out with the choicest materials for their meal. A good deal of exchange of looks ensued between the guests, terminating in a roar of laughter, from which none refrained, save only Taylor, who, looking on with suppressed exultation, enjoyed the fun, which was increased, when the company caused their various importations of game and meats to be introduced. The host very quietly ordered these into his own larder, and the company sat down in high

glee. Breakfast over, under pretence of showing them a valuable picture, Taylor introduced his friends into an adjoining room, where, apologizing for a momentary absence, he left the room, locked the door softly, and set forth to join the procession to the site of the new theatre. The unconscious prisoners, beginning presently to wonder at his prolonged absence, tried the door of their place of durance, and by repeated knocks and vociferations, brought up the servant. The man protested he had no key to the door, but would instantly follow Mr. Taylor and procure it. This he did, and the released captives issuing forth, were greeted with a large placard, announcing to the public an unparalleled novelty in natural history, in the exhibition of fourteen full grown jackalls, or *lions' providers*, to be seen at the house of Mr. Thomas Taylor, all living in one den, in perfect amity! Finally, after renewed laughter, the jackalls, on posting to the Hay-

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

CHAP. I. market, arrived there just after the conclu-
1789—
1820. sion of the ceremony, while Taylor expressed
his surprise that so contemptible an induce-
ment as *a wild beast show* could have de-
tained them from the foundation laying.

The ground on which the King's Theatre was erected, was part of the demesnes of the crown, and was held on lease by Mr. Holloway, who granted it to Mr. Taylor. That portion of the land on which the audience part of the house is erected, was demised to Mr. Taylor for twenty-two years, from August 1792, a term which was afterwards renewed, from the year 1803, at the yearly rent of one thousand two hundred and sixty pounds. The stage part was leased for forty-eight years, from August 1792, at the yearly rent of three hundred pounds, and as to both parts, Mr. Taylor was entitled, in case of Mr. Holloway's procuring a prolonged grant from the crown, to an extension of his leases, until the year

1891. Mr. Holloway has since obtained such a grant.

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1820.

The season of 1791, during which the opera had been conducted at the Pantheon, had proved so little favourable to O'Reilly, the manager, that debts, to the amount of thirty thousand pounds, had been incurred on the concern. On the new Opera House being completed, an outline for a general opera establishment was proposed by Mr. Taylor, along with Messrs. Sheridan, Holloway, and Sheldon, with the approbation of his present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, the Duke of Bedford, and the Marquis of Salisbury. The terms of this intended arrangement were, that the debts of the Pantheon should be transferred to the King's Theatre; that the license for performing operas at the former house should be determined, and one granted to the new theatre exclusively; and that the direction should be reposed in five noblemen, to be nominated by the Prince of

CHAP. I. ^{1789—}_{1820.} Wales, the Duke of Bedford, and the Marquis of Salisbury. In furtherance of this arrangement, the property was, by a deed, bearing date in August, 1792, conveyed to trustees, with an additional provision, that, should the last-mentioned personages omit to nominate directors, or if their nominees should decline to act, the management should devolve on Taylor.

A material obstacle, however, presented itself to the carrying this arrangement into effect. The then Lord Chamberlain refused to license the new theatre. How long this unforeseen occurrence might have kept the main object of the theatre in suspension is uncertain; but the fate of the Pantheon, which was consumed by fire in the following year, removed the impediment, and the King's Theatre being licensed, commenced the regular business of the opera.

By the trust-deed of 1792, the Opera House was charged with an annuity to

O'Reilly and other incumbrances, all of which are discharged, and also an annuity of two hundred and fifty pounds to Mr. Thomas Harris of Covent Garden Theatre, which he afterwards abandoned all claim to.

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No nomination of directors having been made by the personages entitled to the appointment, the entire management of the theatre was exercised by Mr. Taylor until 1803.

The trust-deed enabled Taylor to dispose of forty-one boxes in the theatre (known by the title of property boxes) at one thousand pounds each, for terms of years, all of which expired in 1824 and 1825, for the purpose of raising money to defray the expenses of building the theatre. The number of these boxes was at different times increased to sixty-eight.

In undertaking the Opera, of which he was proprietor previous to the burning down in 1789, Mr. Taylor deviated widely from his original destination in life. He was ori-

CHAP. I. ^{1789—}_{1820.} ginally a clerk in the bank of Snow and Co. in the city. His cleverness and acuteness procured him considerable reputation. But the climate of Snow and Co.'s bank was, as he expressed it, too cold for his complexion. He got rid of this ground of complaint admirably well, by becoming proprietor of the King's Theatre, which was hot water for life to him.

His ingenuity and address enabled him to keep on foot a length of time, notwithstanding an obstinacy of disposition which led him into perpetual dilemmas, and a total want of all conduct and foresight; greatly addicted to practical jokes, he never considered their consequences, and his whole life was, indeed, a continued hoax. He had all Sheridan's deficiency of financial management, without that extraordinary man's resources, so unaccountably brought into action at times when every refuge seemed closed against him. Yet Taylor procured large advances from his friends on his first connexion with the Opera, to enable him to

undertake it. Whether they were ever repaid I cannot say, but have every reason to suppose they were; which, with his habits, can only be accounted for by the excellent support the Opera must have experienced at this period.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

In 1803, Mr. Taylor sold to Mr. Francis Goold one-third of his property in the Opera, for which he received thirteen thousand three hundred and thirty-five pounds. Mr. Goold was a man of family and of fortune, well known in the fashionable circles. His native country was Ireland; where his brother, a baronet, possessed considerable estates. On his arrival in England he instituted the Union Club, at the house in Pall Mall formerly occupied by the Duke of Cumberland. The agreement between Taylor and Goold gave the entire management of the theatre, during their joint lives, to the latter, and vested it in the survivor on the decease of either of them.

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The following year a further purchase was made by Goold from Taylor, increasing his entire share in the theatre to seven sixteenths; the price of the further share was four thousand one hundred and sixty-five pounds. At this time Taylor had become so embarrassed that he was compelled to mortgage his remaining nine sixteenths to Goold for five thousand seven hundred pounds.

From the time of Mr. Goold's first purchase to his death, in 1807, (which the trouble and anxiety arising from his connexion with the Theatre was supposed to hasten), he alone conducted the Opera. Catalani was the great attraction of his management, and her successive engagements entailed on the theatre an expense surpassing what had been before experienced. Mr. Waters, in a pamphlet to be afterwards noticed, gives the total amount received by her from the theatre in the season 1807, including benefits, at five

thousand pounds, and her total profits that year, with concerts, progress in the country, &c., at sixteen thousand seven hundred pounds,—an immense sum to be received in such a period, for the gratification afforded to the public by one individual's powers.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

Scarcely was Mr. Goold dead, than the disputes commenced between Mr. Waters, his acting executor, and Mr. Taylor, which have involved the Opera in litigation apparently interminable. The management, by Goold's death, devolved on Taylor, who was disinclined to submit to the interference which Mr. Waters considered his great interest in the concern, as Mr. Goold's executor, entitled him to exercise. Several meetings took place between the parties and their friends, at one of which Mr. Taylor somewhat unceremoniously devoted the whole company to the infernal gods, and withdrew.

All negociation being in vain, Mr. Waters

CHAP. I. commenced a suit in Chancery against Mr.
1789—
1820. Taylor, to have a manager appointed in his
place ; and shortly afterwards appealed to the
public in a pamphlet published by him under
the title of “ The Opera Glass.” This pam-
phlet contained copies of the correspondence
between the author and Taylor, and other
documents, placing Taylor’s conduct cer-
tainly in no very favourable point of view.
No change, however, took place in the ma-
nagement previous to the year 1813.

It was during this interval that I first be-
came acquainted with Mr. Taylor. He was
introduced to me by a particular friend of his
brothers, Captain and Major Taylor, two
gentlemen whom I mention with unalloyed
pleasure, as men who united the strictest ho-
nour with the most agreeable and engaging
qualities. On this occasion Taylor was, as
usual, in want of money, and wanted me to
take from him a box at the Opera. I was
then, and had been since 1802, extensively

engaged in letting, as agent of the proprietors, such of the property boxes as were not in the immediate use of the owners, as was frequently the case, either by absence from town, or other engagements of the personages to whom the boxes belonged. I advanced Mr. Taylor the money required by him, and from that time he was in the constant habit of resorting to me for assistance. His band required payment every fourth or fifth night, and as regularly as these occasions succeeded each other, so sure was I to see the face of the manager. “He was a fellow of infinite merriment,” and it was impossible to refuse, even if I had not been, as I was, predisposed to aid him; for I considered it a duty I owed to the public, to that class in particular to whom the Opera is more peculiarly a source of amusement, and with whom I was through it connected, to do all in my power to assist the management, and keep up the character of the establishment. As a proof that I

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

CHAP. I. acted in accordance with this impression, I,
1789—
1820. on one occasion, when Catalani refused to
sing unless a debt of upwards of one thousand pounds due to her was paid, gave security for the amount, every farthing of which I was obliged to pay.

But it was impossible to do anything effectually for Taylor. It seemed his delight to involve himself, and as much as it was possible, to perplex others. He quarrelled with every body, ridiculed every body, and hoaxed every body. In 1807 his interest in the theatre had been seized under a legal process, and for many years he had never lived out of the rules of the King's Bench. "How can you conduct the management of the King's Theatre," I said to him one day, "perpetually in durance as you are?"

"My dear fellow," he replied, "how could I possibly conduct it if I were at liberty? I should be eaten up, Sir, devoured. Here comes a dancer—' Mr. Taylor, I want such a

dress ;' another, ' I want such and such orna-ments.' One singer demands to sing in a part not allotted to him ; another to have an addition to his appointments. No,—let *me* be shut up, and they go to Masterson (Taylor's secretary) ; he, they are aware, cannot go beyond his line, but if they get at *me*—pshaw ! no man at large can manage that theatre ; and in faith," added he, " no man that undertakes it ought to go at large."

Mr. Taylor was as little regardful of the rules of the King's Bench, as of any other rules which stood in the way of his inclinations. He would frequently, whilst living *selon les règles*, steal off into the country, and spend days in fishing, an amusement of which he was very fond. I remember his having by some means got hold of a considerable sum of money, which he laid out in the purchase of an estate in a county affording opportunities for his favourite pursuit. Here he went and lived, and ate, drank, and fished,

CHAP. I. till, at the end of two or three months, the
1789—
1820. officers of the law hooked him, and reconveyed
him to his accustomed habitation.

He actually, on one occasion, left the rules, went down to Hull, at the time of an election, and stood for the borough, but was not returned. He was absent for some weeks on this expedition.

As though he had not burdens enough on his shoulders, involved as he was with entanglements, he contrived about this time to get into a fracas with the subscribers. The whole proceeding exhibits admirably the man's character. By way of raising supplies, an end which he tried more ways to accomplish than were ever resorted to for the philosopher's stone, he thought fit to raise the subscriptions to the hundred and eighty pound boxes to three hundred pounds, and the other boxes in proportion. A meeting of the subscribers having been held, in consequence of this demand, and on investigation of the ac-

counts of the house, having determined, that the increased subscription was not required by the rate of income and expenditure, the change was of course resisted. Taylor then wrote to the subscribers, that if they demurred to the increased demand, he would shut up their boxes, and refuse their tickets admission to the pit. Every attempt to dissuade him from this lunatic proceeding was in vain. In connexion with this affair I received the following note :

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

“ Sunday Night.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Get a few copies of the inclosed made and sent to Lord Bruce, G. H. Cavendish, Lady Stafford. Try to see Lord Bruce upon it, as he is a leading man.

“ Tell Masterson to suspend, just for the present, the tickets for 9, 32, and 33, ground tier, and No. 54, upstairs; but the thing must be decided without delay, as by suspense, I may lose certain subscribers, for others who may not at last agree to come in.

Yours truly,

W. T.”

Not choosing to be bravadoed in this manner, many of the subscribers withdrew

CHAP. I. from the Theatre, with the determination of
1789—
1820. setting on foot a rival establishment. The
Pantheon being disengaged, Caldas, a Portuguese, and then a dealer in wines, was prevailed on to undertake it, under a license granted to Colonel Greville, and under the patronage of the seceders from the Haymarket, for the performance of concerts, burlettas, and such other musical entertainments, as could be effected without infringing on the exclusive license of the King's Theatre. The effects of this measure were speedily felt at the treasury in the Haymarket, and could the Pantheon have been licensed as an Opera House, the other Theatre had inevitably been ruined.

Yet Taylor would not take any steps to undo the mischief. Interested as I was in every thing that concerned the Opera, I made every exertion to bring about an accommodation between the manager and subscribers. I found the latter not pertinacious in their

opposition. They agreed, if Taylor would make certain concessions, to return to the Opera House. Many, indeed, of those who had seceded, felt the privation of their customary gratification; and found it but ill compensated by the meagre performances of the Pantheon. Taylor, on his part, had lost six thousand pounds by the affair, during the season of 1811-1812, and, though obstinate as a man could be, was weary of the losing game. The matter was at last compromised, the ex-subscribers returned; the Pantheon was abandoned; Caldas, left to help himself, was ruined, and in a short time made a bankrupt.

This matter was but just settled, when the Lord Chancellor made his decree, on the second bill filed in Chancery by Waters. He ordered that the partnership between Taylor and Waters should be dissolved, accounts taken between them, and the House sold. What was of more consequence to

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

CHAP. I. the public, the House was shut up, the Chan-
1789—
1820. cellor, who had no ear for music, refusing to
appoint a manager.

The subscribers and frequenters of the Opera were now embarrassed. A petition to the Prince Regent was drawn up, and signed by many noble and fashionable names. It addressed his Royal Highness on the ground of his patronage of the Opera scheme of 1791, and prayed for his interference to obtain the re-opening of the House. It was, I believe, presented, but nothing resulted from it.

Meanwhile, I was busily engaged in endeavouring to bring Taylor and Waters to terms, which might have the effect of gratifying the public wishes by leading to the recommencement of the Opera. The reasons which dictated the closing of the concern, were no doubt substantial ones; but setting aside legal considerations, it was a measure productive of great hardship. The owners of the property boxes were, for the time, de-

prived of the benefit of their purchases, and not less than three hundred persons, engaged in and connected with the Theatre, were thrown out of employ. The interests of the Opera of course suffered materially, by this suspension of the business. Nothing else being to be done, everything depended on the issue of my interference between the parties to the suit.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

The office I had undertaken was no easy one, and nothing but my intimate acquaintance with the parties, together with the obligations which, though in unequal degrees, they both lay under to me, could have enabled me to bring it to a successful termination. The utter dissimilarity of disposition which subsisted between the two, added to the difficulty. Waters was a pietist, and piqued himself on the decorum of his conduct. Taylor was as disregarding of forms, as the other was mindful of them. Waters would attend to no business

CHAP. I. on the Sabbath, Taylor had reasons for pre-
1789—
1820. ferring that day to any other. Nothing could
be effected by bringing them together; for
Taylor grew passionate and scurrilous, and
the breach became wider.

As it was impossible that Taylor, embarrassed as he was, could carry on the concern, and Waters wished the entire management to be confided to himself, it was proposed that the whole management should be entrusted to the latter, under a restriction, that the annual expenses of the House should not exceed twenty-eight thousand pounds; a receiver at the same time to be appointed under the direction of the Court. I strenuously recommended to Taylor to accede to this arrangement. I had innumerable interviews with him on the subject, at his apartment in the King's Bench.

At length I obtained from Taylor a letter to his counsel, in the Chancery suit, giving his consent to the proposed arrange-

ment. He gave it to me, and I hastened to CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.
Waters, from whom I procured a similar consent. The counsel were seen, and an order was made by the Court, conformable to the terms of the arrangement. Previous to this agreement, Mr. Taylor had entertained another project. This was to turn the Pantheon against the Opera House, as it had been formerly done against himself; to effect which, he commenced a treaty with Mr. Cundy, the lessee of the Pantheon. Difficulties, however, arising between them, as to the terms on which it was to be taken; and the creditors of Caldas having some claim upon the last-mentioned Theatre, which would probably have been brought forward against any new undertaker, Mr. Taylor was deterred from prosecuting his intention, and the design was abandoned.

In April 1814, the House opened under the management of Waters, though the possession was not transferred without a fracas;

CHAP. I. ^{1789—}_{1820.} for when Mr. Waters's agents went to the Theatre, Mr. Taylor's people, who were still there, refused to admit the new comers, who resorted to the ultima ratio, and turned out those in possession. At night, however, Mr. Taylor's people having left the House again, the expelled party rallied, and retook the contested edifice. The Chancellor was applied to, to extinguish this flame of war, and speedily reduced the contumacious contemners of authority to order. The season was prodigiously successful, it being the year of the peace, and various foreign princes and ambassadors being here. Not a night passed without several of these distinguished personages being present at the House. Frequently his present Majesty, then Regent, would grace the House with his attendance. Mr. Waters gained seven thousand pounds; but the expenses which, judging too sanguinely from this success, he ran into in improving the House, far exceeded that amount, and were never repaid.

The sale of the House taking place this year, under the decree, it was bought by Mr. Waters at the price of thirty-five thousand pounds. The whole management continued vested in him, without any interference on the part of Taylor, who was precluded from it by the arrangement between them.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

During this period, and, indeed, the remainder of his life, Taylor continued a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench ; nor, if I may judge from my experience of him, was it by any means felt by him as an important privation. He met with many persons there of habits congenial with his own ; and the enjoyment of the rules rendered confinement in some measure only nominal. The well-known Sir John Ladd was for some time his companion there. I have often met, when visiting Taylor, Sir John and his Lady, as well as Lady Hamilton, a coterie being thus formed which, in point of vivacity and zest

CHAP. I. of enjoyment, could not be excelled by the
1798—
1820. freest of the free. At these meetings Taylor
would not unfrequently become exceedingly
elevated with wine, and be guilty of the
greatest extravagances. One evening he so
broke through all restraint, that Lady
Ladd found it expedient to empty the boil-
ing contents of the kettle on him, an opera-
tion which had the somewhat paradoxical
effect of completely cooling him.

An application having been made to the
Chancellor for a resale of the Opera, it was
again put up in September 1816, and the
whole concern purchased by Waters for
seventy thousand one hundred and fifty
pounds.

To raise such part of this money as was
required to be immediately paid into court,
Waters executed to Mr. Chambers, the
banker, a mortgage, comprising the Opera
House, and several hundred houses of which
he was the owner, and on which he had in-

vested the greater part of a large fortune CHAP. 1.
1798—
1820.
acquired by him in New South Wales, long
before his connexion with the Opera.

Taylor, now entirely cut out of the concern, found great amusement in practising on the fears of Mr. Chambers by means of anonymous letters, and otherwise prophesying the inevitable ruin of Waters, and the consequent loss to ensue to Mr. Chambers. I particularly remember his addressing a letter to the latter, informing him that Michael Kelly, then at Brighton, was lying at the point of death at an hotel there, and wished, while he yet lived, to communicate to the banker some particulars respecting Waters. Mr. Chambers departed immediately for Brighton in a post-chaise and four, eager for information, and dreading lest he should arrive too late. Alighting at the hotel, the first object that presented itself to his sight was Kelly, not in the agonies of death, but basking in a shady balcony, with

CHAP. I. his cool bottle of claret and pine-apple before
 1789—
 1820. him!

The following specimen of Taylor's love of hoaxing, and his style of anonymous letter-writing, I received one day in October, 1818.

“ If Waters is with you at Brompton, as reported, for God's sake send him away instantly as you get this, for the bailiffs (alias blood-hounds) are out after him in all directions; and tell Chambers not to let him stay at Enfield, for that is a suspected place, and so is Lee's in York Street, Westminster, and Di Giovanni's in Smith Street, and Reed's in Flask Lane, both in Chelsea. It is reported he was seen in the lane near your house, an evening or two ago, with his face blacked, and in the great coat and hat of a Chelsea Pensioner. How could he venture to come back, in a manner, into the lion's jaws? They say there are thirty writs out against him.

“ ——— Ebers, Esq.”

It is hardly necessary to add that the contents of this note were wholly fictitious.

The year 1817 was a brilliant one for the King's Theatre, both as regards performers, performances, and receipts. The company consisted of Mesdames Fodor, Camporese,

Pasta, Signori Crivelli, Begrez, Naldi, Am-
brogetti, Angrisani, &c., nearly all of whom
had been engaged for the first time in this
country by Mr. Ayrton, who went abroad for
the purpose, and undertook the direction of
the Opera. This was the year in which Don
Giovanni was made known to an English
audience, and its success forms an era in the
history of the Theatre.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

In 1818, however, the concern relapsed into its former state ; and the arrangements of Waters were so unsatisfactory to the committee and body of subscribers, that numerous meetings of the noblemen and gentlemen who felt most interest in the subject took place, and the proprietor was censured. Mr. Waters, in a second pamphlet, laid the facts and correspondence before the public, appealing against the conduct of the committee*.

* A curious pamphlet was published (I believe in the same year), entitled ' A Review of this Theatre from the period de-

CHAP. I.

1789—

1820.

Mr. Waters's embarrassments became more and more pressing. Previously to this period I had advanced him, both on account of boxes which I took from him, and by way of loan, sums of money to a considerable amount. He now (1820) applied to Chambers for a further advance from him, and on meeting with a decided refusal, so irritated the latter by his intemperate language, that shortly afterwards the property of the House was seized under an execution at the suit of Chambers.

The inability of Waters to obtain a further advance was of momentous importance; for so completely was the treasury exhausted, that the pay of the orchestra was ten nights in arrear, and no means existed of defraying

scribed by the *Enterprizer*.' It bears the assumed signature of 'Veritas,' and is now very scarce; an action having been commenced against the writer by Taylor, and discontinued on condition of the work being suppressed. It contains many severe cuts at Taylor, and hints at a ridiculous liaison between him and the celebrated singer, Madame Banti, who was then advanced in years.

their claims. In consequence, they unani-
mously refused to perform; and all means
being in vain tried to overcome the difficulty,
except the only one which could have been
effectual, and which was impracticable, mat-
ters were brought to a crisis.

CHAP. I.
1789—
1820.

On the evening of the 15th of August, 1820, an opera and ballet having been announced for representation, the company, on arriving at the doors of the House, were unable to obtain admission. In lieu of their expected entertainment, they found the following placard affixed to the Theatre:

“ King’s Theatre, Tuesday, August 15.

“ The nobility and gentry, subscribers to the Opera, and the public, are most respectfully informed, that, owing to sudden and unforeseen circumstances, there can be no performance at this Theatre this evening.”

As nine nights of the season were yet due, the subscribers, who were thus deprived of what they were fairly entitled to, naturally testified no little indignation.

CHAP. I. The next day it was ascertained that Mr.
1789—
1820. Waters had withdrawn to Calais, where he
has, with little or no intermission, ever since
remained.

The Theatre was now without any guide, a huge hulk floating without a pilot. The dissatisfaction was general: the public complained of the privation of a favourite amusement, the subscribers and box-proprietors sustained an injury in their property, and the performers and retainers of the Theatre were left unpaid and unemployed. To myself, individually, the event was of serious loss, as I lost the profits I should have derived from letting of boxes, besides all chance of recovering the sums I had advanced for the boxes I had taken. Such was the abrupt termination of the season of 1820.

CHAPTER II.

Endeavours to Re-open the Opera.—Intended Purchase.—Meeting of Subscribers.—Commencement of my Management.—Mr. Ayrton.—Committee.—Lease for the Season of 1821.—Engagements with Performers.—Camporese.—Ronzi de Begnis.—Mori.—Vestris.—Marinoni.—Curioni.—De Begnis.—De Ville.—Other Performers.

THEY are mistaken who think that it is from CHAP. II.
1821.
vanity or self-love that every new enterpriser
in a hazardous part imagines his own chances
of success better than those of his predecessors.
Every succeeding adventurer has some
new grounds of dependance not enjoyed by
those who went and failed before him. Un-
fortunately, he forgets that they too had
opportunities or aids of which he is probably
devoid.

It was not from any overweening confidence in my own powers that I undertook the management of the King's Theatre. To undertake it with confidence is, indeed, im-

CHAP. II. possible. What a multitude of conflicting
1821. interests, tastes, dispositions, and caprices,
is it not necessary to reconcile! And where,
to avoid one rock, it is necessary to run on
another, the odds are sadly against the pilot
who ventures in such perilous seas.

The late manager having withdrawn, without delaying his departure by any superfluous ceremonies, the public was surprised to find itself unexpectedly deserted. The fashionable world was annoyed at being deprived of its resources for two evenings every week. The lovers of the Opera, those (now a numerous class) who felt and understood its beauties, reluctantly found themselves debarred from their accustomed enjoyments. It was necessary that something should be done. Meetings were held and committees formed, to consider the means of reviving the expired flame on the deserted altars of the song and the dance.

The first plan was for the purchase of the

Theatre by a number of the nobility and gentry, who should take shares in the property; whilst to guard against an unlimited personal responsibility, an Act of Parliament should be obtained, incorporating the shareholders, and containing the needful enactments and regulations for the establishment of the concern. This plan was warmly seconded; but it was found that the litigation in which the King's Theatre was so unfortunately entangled was an insurmountable obstacle to effecting the purchase with advantage. The scheme was, therefore, abandoned.

CHAP. II.
1821.

Being known to most of the subscribers from my connexion with the Opera, and otherwise, and particularly to the holders of property boxes, I was naturally party to many discussions on the subject, and was invited by several of those who took most interest in the concern to undertake the now abandoned post of manager. I objected

CHAP. II. my want of sufficient musical knowledge,
1821. and the uncertain nature of the concern.
With the experience of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Waters before my eyes, I must have been very sanguine indeed to have snatched eagerly at the prospect thus held out to me. The answer to my remonstrances was, we know all this, and all this has nothing to do with it; the practical information in which you conceive yourself deficient can be supplied by proper assistance, and the Theatre *shall* be supported. I suffered myself to be persuaded. In so doing I sacrificed my own convictions and wishes to the public desire of seeing the Opera re-opened.

On the 26th December, a meeting of the proprietors of boxes and subscribers was held; and at this meeting I signified my consent to undertake the Theatre for one year, and to take on myself the whole responsibility of the concern. I stipulated that my acceptance of it should be conditional on Mr.

Ayrton's undertaking the direction of the Opera. With this precaution I thought myself tolerably safe; for the talent and established reputation of Mr. Ayrton was in itself a guarantee of success. CHAP. II.
1821.

The Marquis of Ailesbury was in the chair at this meeting, which was attended by a large number of personages of rank and influence.

Mr. Ayrton having at the meeting agreed to undertake the direction, a resolution was passed, and signed by the Duke of Argyle, Marquis of Ailesbury, Marquis Cholmondeley, Earls Mount Edgecumbe and Fife, Count St. Antonio, and Viscounts Lowther and Hampden, declaring "their readiness to lend him their best assistance and countenance in the conduct of so arduous an undertaking, commenced under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, arising from the retarded state of the necessary preparations."

Having thus fairly committed myself, I

CHAP. II. wrote, by the advice of Lord Ailesbury, to
1821.
a considerable number of noblemen and gentlemen, requesting their assistance and superintendence in the character of a committee. This committee was ultimately formed, consisting of five noblemen, viz.—the Marquis of Ailesbury, the Earl of Mount Edgecumbe, (author of the very interesting little work, entitled ‘Musical Reminiscences,’) the Earl of Fife, Viscount Lowther, and Count St. Antonio.

Having mentioned the names of these noble personages, justice requires me to add (though disapproving abstractedly of the management of a Theatre under a committee) that no manager was ever more fortunate than myself in the constitution of his committee, as regards the individual members. But as regards the system itself, it is, perhaps, more than questionable whether the advantages attendant on a committee preponderate over the objections to it.

The executive department in establishments of every nature is so much more effective when conducted by the exertions and on the views of an individual, than when dependent on the discordant and frequently opposite motives of a number, that this consideration alone, in point of decision and despatch, is entitled to great weight. It ought rarely to be sacrificed, and never, unless some certain advantage can be gained by its abandonment. It is alleged that the patronage of the individuals composing a committee, men of station and wealth, is essential to the prosperity of the establishment. Grant the advantage. Does the support of a Committee, great as it is, counterbalance the evils inseparable from a management under a Committee?

As it is not presumable that the opinions of all will coincide on subjects so little reducible to a fixed standard, as the merits of one singer or dancer, as contrasted with another,

CHAP. II.
1821.

CHAP. II. 1821. each member will probably desire to introduce the performer whom he prefers. The nominal manager, actually so only in his responsibility, must offend a part of his committee, by non-compliance with their wishes, or incur ruinous expense by the engagement of artists, of whose services he has no need, and whose places are already supplied. And this will be the case, though private favour or prejudice be supposed to be out of the question.

The performers of a Theatre can never be induced to observe the necessary subordination to a manager, while an authority exists independent of him, to whom an appeal may, in effect, be carried against his regulations. It then becomes his part to pay immense sums of money, to persons over whom he can exert no efficient control, but whose deficiencies and irregularities are duly placed by the public, before the scenes, to the account of the manager only.

In a word, is it not obvious, that he whose CHAP. II.
1821. property is alone at stake, is the person most interested, and, consequently, most likely to exert himself to gratify the public, upon whose gratification his own success depends?

To return from this digression. On applying to Mr. Chambers the mortgagee, and Mr. Mills, the authorized agent of Mr. Waters, for a lease of the Theatre for the season of 1821, it appeared that the late manager was under the following engagements with performers for that season. Angrisani at the salary for the season of six hundred pounds; Romero at four hundred and ten pounds; Camporese at one thousand five hundred and fifty pounds; Zara, as scene painter, at one hundred and eighty-nine pounds; Spagnoletti at two hundred and fifty pounds; and Dragonetti at one hundred and fifty pounds. These engagements I was required to take on myself. Although the late period

CHAP. II. of commencing the season was of course dis-
1821.

— advantageous to me, I did not hesitate in entering into the agreements, and Messrs. Birch and Chambers, and Mr. Mills, on the behalf of Mr. Waters, contracted to execute a lease to me of the Theatre properties and wardrobe, for the season, at the rent of three thousand one hundred and eighty pounds thirteen shillings.

The first object being to obtain an unexceptionable company of performers, both in the opera and the ballet, I determined to spare no pains or expense in attaining this end. In regard to the opera, I had, by taking upon myself Mr. Waters's engagements, possessed myself of several performers of first-rate talent, and it was only necessary to fill up the required list.

Madame Camporese, for she continued the use of that name, though she had married a member of the family of Giustiniani, had established her reputation in this country,



MADAME CAMPORESE.

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Printed by Engelmann, Graf, Coindet, & Co.

in the season of 1817, in which she performed as first woman singer, and had revisited England with powers increased rather than impaired, and with taste and science that gave a graceful finish to whatever she undertook. She continued one of the most valued aids of the Opera, until the end of the season of 1823.

CHAP. II.
1821.

Whilst in Paris, I was introduced to Camporese, in the Autumn of 1816, by Pucitta, at the house of the celebrated composer Paer. She did me the favour to sing, and was accompanied by that great master on the piano.

The next place where I saw her, was at the Scala at Milan. The people crowded nightly to hear. She was an immense favourite ; and many anecdotes were told of her kindness and the excellence of her disposition. The following is one.

An intimate acquaintance waited on her one morning to make a request. In the Hospital for the Insane, a man was confined, literally *fa-*

CHAP. II. *natico per musica* ; he had lost his senses on
1821.

the failure of an opera, in which the labour of the composer was greater than the excellence of his music. This unfortunate had by some accident heard of Camporese, whose fame filled the city, and immediately conceived an ungovernable wish to hear her. For awhile his representations passed unnoticed, he grew ungovernable, and had to be fastened to his bed. In this state, Camporese's friend had beheld him.

She was dressing for an evening party, when this representation was made to her. She paused a moment on hearing it. Then throwing a cloak over her shoulders, said, "Come then." "Whither?" "To the Ospedale." "But why? there is no occasion to go now—to-morrow, or the next day." "To-morrow—no, indeed, if I can do this poor man good, let me go instantly." And they went.

Being shown into a room, separated from

that of the maniac only by a thin wall, Camporese began to sing one of Haydn's melodies. The attendants in the next room observed their patient suddenly become less violent, then composed, at last he burst into tears. The singer now entered, she sat down, and sang again. When she had concluded, the poor composer took from under the bed a torn sheet of paper, scored with an air of his own composition, and handed it to her. There were no words, and nothing in the music, but Camporese running it over, sang it to some words of Metastasio, with such sweetness, that the music seemed excellent. "Sing it me once more," said the maniac. She did so, and departed accompanied by his prayers, and the tears of the spectators.

Camporese had been engaged by Mr. Waters, to perform during the season of 1821, and her engagement was one of those formed by the late manager, which I under-

CHAP. II.
1821.

CHAP. II. took. My arrangements with Mr. Waters's
1821. agent, and the mortgagees of the Theatre, were completed in January, and I wrote to this lady a few days afterwards, stating that I had taken upon myself the agreement with her. This letter expressed, also, what I really felt,—my satisfaction at being supported at my commencement by her talents.

The agreement for the season was, that she should receive one thousand five hundred and fifty pounds. I afterwards consented, at her request, to allow her an additional sum weekly, for dresses. She desired leave to sing at all concerts, and it was granted; she wished to have her salary paid in advance, and it was done—nothing was refused. She did not abuse this facility on the part of those with whom she had to treat. Yet like every other singer, however amiable and estimable, she was griping in her demands on the treasury, in forming her engagements. Nor is there any real incon-

sistency in this. For the only object which can induce a woman of character and education to come on the stage being the hope of emolument, the organ of acquisitiveness may naturally be expected universally to develop its power with proportionate strength. I may here mention, that many of the performers received more than I have stated as their actual engagements. The sums paid will appear in the accounts introduced in the Appendix.

Few public performers have received the same degree of countenance in private circles as Madame Camporese. She was treated, by persons of the first quality, with all the respect and attention befitting her talent and character, mingling in their entertainments, not as merely tolerated but recognised, as one whose respectable birth and connexions qualified her to mix in polished society. The Countess St. Antonio, one of the most distinguished patrons of the Italian

CH. II. Opera, was her firm friend; so were the
1821. Marquis and Marchioness of Bristol; and a
number of celebrated names might be
added.

A great deal of trouble was bestowed to obtain permission from the manager of Drury Lane Theatre, for Madame Vestris to appear at the King's Theatre on the two weekly nights of performance. Mr. Elliston's objections were at length overcome, and Madame Vestris engaged at twenty-five pounds a night.

Ronzi de Begnis—who does not know her as the model of voluptuous beauty? Perhaps no performer was ever more enthusiastically admired. Her beauty came on the spectator at once, electric and astonishing. You did not study her, nor trace out feature by feature, till you grew warmed into admiration; one look fixed. Her personal perfection took the more sure hold, because it was not of the ordinary stamp. Her features, but not her

complexion, were Italian. The characteristic of the latter was a fairness so perfect as to be almost dazzling, the more so, because so palpably set off by the glossy blackness of her hair. Her face was beautiful and full of intelligence, and made almost eloquent by the incessant brilliance of eyes, large, black, and expressive, and in which the playful and the passionate by turns predominated; either expression seemed so natural to them, that it seemed for the time incapable of being displaced by another as suitable and as enchanting. Her mouth was so delightfully formed, that she took care never to disfigure it, and whatever she sang she never forgot this care. Her figure, if a thought more slender, would have been perfect; perhaps it was not less pleasing because it inclined to exceed the proportions to which a statuary would have confined its swell. The form, when at rest, did not seem a lively one, but when in action it appeared perfectly buoyant, so full of spirit,

CH. II. 1821. so redundant with life. The exquisite outline of her swelling throat, pencilled when she sang with the blue tinge of its full veins, admitted of no parallel—it was rich and full—ineffectual terms to convey an idea of its beauty. But to be thought of justly she must be seen.

The remuneration given to this attractive performer, for the part of the season in which she performed, was six hundred pounds. Her vivid delineation of comic characters made her the best *artiste* in the opera buffa I have known. And much as may be said of her beauty, more, much more, may be said of the talent of a performer, who was alike able effectively to sustain the characters of Fatima, in *Il Turco in Italia*, Agia, in the *Mosè*, or *Pietro*, and Donna Anna, in *Giovanni*. In the first, her beauty, gaiety, and that little touch of the devil so exquisite and essential in a comic actress, were almost too bewitching; but ad-

miration was blended with astonishment, when the representative of the coquettish Fatima, changing her walk, exhibited, with a life and force that spoke to the soul, the wretchedness of the bereaved Donna Anna, when, in thrilling accents of despair, she calls on her dead father, and invokes her lover to avenge his fate.

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It has so happened, that the very walks in which Ronzi was most singularly adapted to charm have, by coincidences as peculiar as unfortunate, never been fully open to her. Camporese, qualified by nature to sustain comic as well as serious parts, was too jealous of her station as prima donna assoluta to suffer a rival nearer her throne than was unavoidable. Camporese disappeared, but causes, similar in nature and operation, have too often debarred Ronzi from opportunities of displaying her talents to the utmost advantage.

Madame de Begnis came to this country along with her husband, leaving behind her

CH. II. a brilliant reputation at the Italian Theatre
1821. of Paris, where she held the rank of first woman.

Signora Mori, sister of the able violinist of the same name, was established at the Theatre previous to my first season. Her engagement was for three hundred pounds.

The principal male performers, who had not before appeared at the King's Theatre, were Curioni, the first tenor, and De Begnis, the first buffo. The former had had engagements at several of the Italian theatres, and, among others, at that of Barcelona, where Signor Benelli engaged him for me. Curioni was then, as now, a leading favourite; his sweet, mellifluous-toned voice was most pleasingly managed by him. In person and countenance he was one of the handsomest men that have ever appeared at the Italian Opera, and he proved a very useful and efficient performer at the time; as he continued on the stage, his talents, by practice and cul-



MADAME RONZI DE BEGNIS.

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tivation, were constantly progressive, and proportionably estimated. Curioni received from me six hundred pounds this season, which included his expenses to England.

Signor de Begnis, the husband of Madame Ronzi de Begnis, had been previously, as well as his wife, engaged at the Italian Theatre, Paris. Few performers had a more original conception of their parts than this excellent comic singer, though he, perhaps, sometimes filled his characters to exaggeration ; his voice was deep, though not perfect in tone, and he possessed command of feature sufficient to enhance greatly the value of his performance. He still retains his popularity ; and being a young man, and attentive to his profession, will doubtless continue to do so. His salary was six hundred pounds.

A less eminent, but by no means worthless, performer, was the basso cantante, Paolo de Ville. He maintained a respectable station during two seasons here, and afterwards

CH. II. returned to the Continent. He was a man
1821. of lively temperament, and somewhat of an epicure, which led to the abrupt termination of his career. He was attacked by illness, in consequence of eating too plentifully of oysters, and died very shortly afterwards. De Ville received for his first season three hundred pounds.

These names comprise all the male performers now first introduced to the boards of the King's Theatre. Signors Torri, Begrez, Ambrogetti, and Angrisani, were also leading men, and had been before the public previous to this season. The two first yet maintain their station. Ambrogetti is a remarkable illustration of an observation that has ceased to appear paradoxical, that the liveliest men in public are those whose private hours are the saddest and most desponding. With an overwhelming humour, the outgushings of which never failed in its effect on others, Ambrogetti was himself the most wretched

of men, a prey to the horrors of hypo-
chondria. Successful, and a favourite, he
abandoned the stage, and returned to Italy,
where it was reported, but incorrectly, that
he had retired to the seclusion of monastic
life. A kindred disposition distinguishes a
performer yet on the stage of another the-
atre, who awakens laughter with a look at
night, and haunts the streets in the day-
time, with his hands in his pockets, and a
countenance lugubrious as the death's head
memento of an Egyptian festival.

The salaries of three of the last-mentioned performers were, Torri, five hundred pounds; Ambrogetti and Angrisani, six hundred pounds each. Add to these, Placci, four hundred pounds; Romero, four hundred and ten pounds; Di Giovanni, one hundred and twenty-seven pounds; and Morandi, eighty-four pounds.

The chorus consisted of thirty-six performers, the expense of whom for the sea-

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son, amounted to upwards of five hundred pounds.

The principal of these engagements were, with Mr. Ayrton's approbation, concluded by Signor Benelli, who was recommended to me by the Earl of Fife, to undertake the department. He had been a kind of manager of the Opera at Bologna, and subsequently Regisseur of the Théâtre Italien at Paris, and was well acquainted with the continental performers. A natural leaning to the interests of his countrymen, between whom and myself he stood as negociator, I ought to have foreseen; that I did not was of little importance, compared to consequences resulting from my connexion with him in other respects. Some of these will appear in the course of these recollections.

In addition to the vocal and instrumental performers, whom I spared no pains and no expense to obtain, I engaged a gentleman to fill a station, unnecessary enough at the

Italian Opera in this country, namely, that of poet. Experience sufficiently proves to us, that the operas imported from the continent are, both in music and poetry, such as to render nugatory here the employment either of a poet, or a composer (other than as a conductor and arranger.) However, I had both, Signor Scappa as composer, and Signor Stefano Vestris as poet. The latter was, indeed, for several seasons, in a manner forced on me. He was the father of Charles Vestris, whose wife was the sister of Ronzi de Begnis, and when Charles Vestris and his wife entered into their annual engagements, the poet was invariably included in the agreement, at a rate of remuneration for his services, to which his consanguinity to those performers was his chief title. CH. II.
1821.

Still further to strengthen the force of the Opera, I made every endeavour to form an engagement with Madame Sala, then of Milan, and in vogue there, as a prima donna

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of great merit. My overtures were unsuccessful, that lady's engagements incapacitating her from accepting my offers. She afterwards married a Spanish nobleman, and abandoned the stage.

Shortly after the commencement of the season, I engaged Mademoiselle Marinoni (the elder), on the introduction of Mr. Masterson of Rotterdam, the late Secretary to the King's Theatre, under Mr. Taylor's management. Her chief object was to establish herself as a concert singer, for which she was more suited than for the stage, her voice not being sufficiently powerful. A personal defect, one of her legs being shorter than the other, gave rise to the soubriquet of "the limping Tancred," applied to her on her appearance in that character.

As a performer, Marinoni failed, but succeeded in gaining the reputation she desired as a concert singer, and teacher of music. Her private character is exemplary; out of

the proceeds of her profession, she has for many years maintained both her parents, and is esteemed as an amiable and deserving woman. Her younger sister, who possesses much talent, is now performing in the Italian Opera at Paris.

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CHAPTER III.

Constitution of the Ballet.—French Theatres.—Boisgerard's Embassy to Paris.—Deshayes.—Albert.—Noblet.—Montessu.—Melanie.—Arrival of the new Performers in London.—Rehearsals.—“ L'Offrande à Terpsichore.”—Varennnes.

CH. III. No feature of the arrangements made for
 1821. } the first season gave more general satisfaction, than the constitution of the ballet department. The procrastinated war, which, until the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, had kept England and France in hostilities, had rendered the importation of dancers from the latter country almost impracticable. Nor during the interval which had since elapsed, had any very effective addition been made to the list of dancers. A few of merit, indeed, but only of secondary note in their own country, had been engaged; and travellers on the continent, a term which at this period comprised every body, returned home in raptures with the exhibitions of our

neighbours, and little inclined to regard with CH. III.
complacency the inferior representations of 1821.
the English stage.

The French Theatres, it is well known, are under the immediate controul of the Government. The performers for the Italian Opera and Ballet, educated at the schools of the Royal Academy of Music, and thence selected to fill the parts for which their talents may adapt them, are so far the property of the Government, as to be unable to form engagements elsewhere, without leave of the ministers who preside over the theatrical department. Mr. Waters had made repeated efforts to prevail on *artistes* to come over, either with the required *congé*, if attainable, or by such clandestine means as could be carried into effect. His measures, however, failed, and his want of success appears to have been one cause of the disagreement between his committee and himself.

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It was indeed a task of no small difficulty to procure the sanction of the French authorities to an engagement. The ballet is an object of so much consideration, with a people with whom dancing is one of the essential supports of the graces of life, that any attempt to withdraw an artist of note is watched with extreme jealousy, and many engagements concluded between the parties were abandoned, in consequence of the refusal of the requisite license.

To facilitate to the utmost the acquisition of French dancers of greater celebrity than had hitherto appeared at the King's Theatre, it was proposed that M. Boisgerard, who held, under the new management, the situation of second Ballet-Master, which he had before filled, should proceed to Paris. It was rightly supposed, that his practical knowledge, and the consideration in which he was held in Paris, would enable him to enter into treaty for performers with some

chance of success. This plan was warmly approved of by the noble Lords on my Committee, who assisted in its execution, by furnishing M. Boisgerard with introductions, which proved of great service, to those personages who might be considered most willing and able to forward the object of his mission. CH. III.
1821.

M. Deshayes, afterwards engaged as first Ballet-Master, was then at Paris, and would aid Boisgerard in his undertaking.

So important do all matters connected with their ballet appear to the French, that the correspondence incident to these negotiations was required to be transmitted, through the medium of the English Ambassador at Paris, to the Baron de la Ferté, the intendant of the Royal Theatres.

Boisgerard, having arrived at Paris, lost no time in commencing his labours in conjunction with Deshayes. They directed their endeavours towards forming an engagement

CH. III
1821. with Albert, *premier danseur*, and Mademoiselles Bigottini and Noblet, from all of whom, in the first instance, they received a refusal to quit Paris. This ordinary method of angling for advanced offers did not discourage our agents, who finally agreed with all three, conditionally on their *congés* being obtained from the administration of the Academy of Music. This was a task of more difficulty, and as to Bigottini, their endeavours were rendered nugatory, at first by the hesitation, and, finally, by the decided refusal of the administration to allow her to visit England.

After considerable difficulty, Albert and Noblet were at length permitted to come, on condition that their engagements here should be for two months only, and that they should be succeeded at the expiration of that period by Coulon and Fanny Bias. The pecuniary arrangements were, that Albert should receive fifty pounds for every

night of performance, and twenty-five pounds for the expenses of his voyage; Noblet to have five hundred and fifty pounds for her engagement for the two months, and twenty-five pounds expenses. Coulon and Bias were to receive each the same as Noblet. CH. III.
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For the entire season were engaged, Montessu, at four hundred and thirty pounds, Lacombe, at two hundred and forty pounds, and Mademoiselle De Varennes, at two hundred and seventy pounds.

In addition to these performers, the artists of the former managements, with Mademoiselle Melanie at their head, were retained.

It was my wish to procure, besides the dancers already named, Mademoiselle Eliza, whose reputation had been established in England as a dancer of the first merit, during the period of an engagement here with Mr. Waters—unquestionably the most fortunate that gentleman had it in his power to make in the ballet department. Her

CH. III. 1821. engagements abroad frustrated my views,

though no regard was shown to expense in the offers made to her. M. and Mademoiselle Paul entered into an engagement, but as leave of absence could not be obtained, it was necessarily abandoned. I endeavoured, also, to obtain M. Joly for the season, but was unable to accomplish this object, though he was afterwards engaged to perform the part of the Gardener, in the ballet of 'Nina,' brought out for Noblet's benefit.

The interest excited among the frequenters of the Opera on the arrival of the newly-engaged performers was intense. The incense offered to Noblet's vanity must have been overwhelming, had she been accessible to such influence. She was run after, invited, worshipped; everybody thought and spoke of her. I considered myself not a little fortunate in engaging her, and obtaining her *congé*—a more graceful or attractive person could not be found on the stage at

that time. At Paris, where dancers usually *debüt* before they have attained the excellence of which they are capable, and improve by degrees before the eyes of the spectators, the sudden appearance of Noblet, who, by an exception to the usage just mentioned, had been kept back until she had attained absolute perfection in her art, was electrifying; and her first coming out established her reputation. CH. III.
1821.

Among the most enthusiastic of those who admired her graceful performance, and the expression which characterised her motions, and gave them the force of language, was the Earl of Fife, whom I have before mentioned as a zealous supporter of the Opera. Exceedingly attached to the performances of the ballet, he was overjoyed at the arrival of a first-rate talent in his favourite line, and hastened to welcome the new comers. A carriage was sent for the accommodation of the *première danseuse*, during her resi-

CH. III. 1821. dence here, and presents were lavished on her unsparingly, in compliment to her superior merit.

The day after her arrival his Lordship called on me to be introduced to her, and I accompanied him to her lodgings, where the gloom which our dull atmosphere throws over the spirits of those accustomed to sunnier skies, seemed quite dispelled by the complimentary strain in which Noblet was welcomed by such a connoisseur as his Lordship.

Noblet's form was perfect; she could scarcely in other respects be with propriety called handsome. The sparkling vivacity of her black eyes deceived many into a first-sight belief that she had more beauty than really belonged to her, but a longer acquaintance showed that her features, though pleasing, were not beautiful.

No sooner was a rehearsal announced, than all the men of fashion, and who were,

or would be thought, judges of the graceful, thronged with applications for admission, paying for the liberty of being present, as to a regular representation. Nor was the curiosity confined to the gentlemen; ladies of the first rank and fashion found their way to the Theatre, and partook largely of the interest excited by the new proceedings. CH. III.
1821.

To gratify the pressing wish of the subscribers to witness the performance of the strangers, a divertissement was hastily got up by Deshayes, the ballet-master, entitled ‘*L’Offrande à Terpsichore* ;’ a piece without any great pretensions in point of design, but comprising many pleasing groupings and situations, calculated to display the merits of the dancers. This was immediately put in rehearsal, and was produced on the first evening of the regular performances.

The admiration excited by Noblet was not a temporary feeling; she continued in undiminished favour. Lord Fife generally

CH. III. gave a dinner on Sundays at the Pulteney
1821. Hotel, where he then resided, at which
Noblet and the other principal dancers were
regular guests, to testify his regard for the
talents of this accomplished performer.

Julia De Varennes possessed the advantages
of face and figure, perhaps, as much as any
of the female performers engaged; but her
style of dancing, though elegant, had not the
abundant grace of Noblet, or the exquisite
prettiness of the *demi-caractère* steps of
Fanny Bias. She was, however, generally
liked, and was in particular patronized by
a nobleman who attended a good deal to
the affairs of the Opera.

The character of Albert as a dancer, is
so familiar to the public mind as to pre-
clude the necessity of any very particular
mention of him. When he appeared there
was no recollection of any one who ap-
proached to an equality with him. His
physical agility, his symmetrical frame, and

his good taste, combined in making him CH. III.
1821. decidedly the best male performer in the ballet that had appeared in England; indeed, I never heard it doubted by even the first judges in Paris, that he was the most graceful dancer remembered.

Melanie and Mengin, who had hitherto sustained the rank of *premières danseuses*, and been considered as perfect in their art, were now, by the new engagements, thrown into secondary places. The former was remarkable for her beautiful feet and the symmetry of her hands, which were models: Mengin was a very pretty woman, and a graceful dancer; but both ceased to attract notice when displaced by the novel favourites.

The engagement of the dancers was not the only thing which pleased in the new arrangements. Hitherto the wardrobe and scenery departments had been very inefficiently attended to. If a good performer

CH. III.
1821.

was engaged, it was considered that every thing was accomplished; and the same scenes, the same dresses, and the same decorations, figured in every successive performance, till the eye was wearied and the imagination disgusted, by seeing different countries and ages all exhibiting the same scenes and costumes. Nor was the scarcity of dresses confined to the coryphées and figurantes of the ballet, and the inferior characters of the Opera, the *premiers sujets* were as sparingly appointed. I endeavoured to remedy this under the impression, that an establishment like the King's Theatre required, not only first-rate talent, but all the accessaries by which the display of that talent could be rendered most effective; and gave almost unlimited powers to Zara and Sestini for the improvements of the scenery and dresses. The wardrobe was replenished, and repeated changes of dress liberally introduced in the same performance, as in

the ballet of 'Aline,' in which the dresses were three times varied. The scenery was placed under the direction of Signor Zara, as principal painter; he was an élève of the celebrated Ciceri, the favourite artist of the Académie Royale, and, as Ciceri himself said, his best pupil. Signor Zara's merits are well known, and become the more striking on consideration of the difficulties with which he has had to contend at the King's Theatre, in consequence of the inconvenient smallness of the stage—an obstacle which he has shown a skill in overcoming equally rare and surprising. These details were the more necessary to be attended to, as all the other Theatres of the metropolis exerted themselves in preserving the correctness of their scenery and costume, and giving to them every possible degree of magnificence; it was at the Opera only,—the Theatre protected by his Majesty as his own, and frequented by the nobility of the empire,—

CH. III.
1821.

CH. III. ^{1821.} that scenes and dresses were found mean,
and inconsistent with the character of the performances. I hope I succeeded in reforming this evil; soon after, Aumer became my ballet-master; his 'Alfred' was mounted at Paris, and, magnificent as are the representations of ballets at the *Grand Opera*, the same piece was brought out here in such a manner as to suffer little by comparison with the Parisian 'Alfred.'

CHAPTER IV.

The Theatre licensed—Patronized by his Majesty—Newly decorated—Stage-doors opened—Green-Room—Opening of Season—"La Gazza Ladra"—Royal Visit—"Paris et Œnone"—"Agnese"—"Tancredi"—"La Clemenza di Tito"—Mad. Albert—Noblet's Benefit—"Nina"—His Majesty's second Visit—Deshayes recalled—"Il Turco in Italia"—Fanny Bias—"Il Don Giovanni"—Torri—Begreq—Mr. Ayrton—Coulon—New engagement with Noblet and Albert—Treaty with French Academy—"La Jeunesse d'Alcide"—"Le Nozze de Figaro"—Conclusion of the Season, and its results—Difficulties of Management—Departures—Purchase of Theatre attempted.

THE performances at the King's Theatre not being conducted under a patent, but by virtue of the license * of the Lord Chamberlain, granted annually, Lord Ailesbury, the Chairman of my Committee, applied to Lord Hertford, the then Chamberlain, and obtained the license for my first season.

That the re-opening of the Theatre might be under the most favourable auspices, it was

* A specimen of the annual licenses, and also of those granted for new operas, will be found in the Appendix.

CH. IV.
1822.

thought very desirable, if possible, to procure his Majesty's avowed patronage. Several of the Lords on the Committee of the Theatre, therefore, waited on the King at Brighton, and represented to him the circumstances which had given rise to the new management, and the arrangements made for its conduct. His Majesty was pleased not only to grant his sanction, but, I believe, to express his satisfaction at the measures which had been adopted.

A good deal, however, remained to be done before the doors could be opened to the public. The house was repainted; the dingy red in which the audience part had hitherto been clothed, being abolished, and replaced by a light blue ground. Ornaments after approved designs, were adopted, and the appearance of the house rendered lighter and more classical.

Some years previous to my commencement, a considerable disturbance had arisen in the

Theatre, from a part of the company, who CH. IV.
1821. had been admitted to the stage, coming too forward during the representation. The audience before the curtain signified their disapprobation; the effect of which was that the intruders advanced still more; and one or two individuals were so ill-advised, as to insult the audience by the most contemptuous gestures. One of the guard which was then always stationed behind the scenes, struck a byestander with his bayonet. A hurricane immediately ensued; loud cries demanded the expulsion of the offenders; and the tumult becoming universal, the chairs were flung out of the boxes, chandeliers broken, and property to a great extent destroyed. Complaints were made to the Chamberlain, and his Lordship directed that the stage-doors should be closed.

So long a period having elapsed since this outrage, I ventured, on assuming the management of the Theatre, to re-open the passages

CH. IV. to the stage, to the great satisfaction of a
1822. large portion of the subscribers and attenders
at the Opera. No change has been since
made, nor has any thing occurred to require
any new regulation in this point.

Another alteration, which was shortly afterwards made, may be mentioned here—this was the erection of a Green-Room, which the Theatre had not hitherto possessed. I undertook this expensive addition at the earnest request of many of the subscribers, some of whom were so eager for it, as to offer to put their names down as subscribers for one-half of the necessary outlay; however, the entire expense was paid by myself. This room was certainly an advantage to the Theatre, as the dancers could now practise in it, immediately before their *entrée* on the stage, which contributed to the excellence of the performances.

Every preparation being now completed, the 10th of March was fixed on as the first evening of performance. The Opera selected

by Mr. Ayrton was 'La Gazza Ladra,' then new to an English audience. On the preceding evening, a dress rehearsal was given; visitors thronged to the Theatre, and the house was splendidly filled. My mind was then fully and anxiously occupied with anticipations of the following evening. Yet, when I looked around me, and saw the appearance of the Theatre, once again filled as it then was, and reflected how short a space had elapsed since all here was confusion and disappointment, some feelings of exultation did occur to me.

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The representations of the evening passed off with great success. Every body seemed pleased; many of the audience offered me their thanks for having embarked in this perilous adventure. Praises were lavished on what had been done, and compliments were paid to the dispatch in which all had been accomplished. Perhaps I am too egotistical in dwelling on these things; but they

CH. IV. ^{1821.} were important to me at the time, for I was
only entering on the stage, and made no allowance for the candle-light medium through which my prospects were beheld. I have had experience enough since to teach me how much on which I then depended was even less real than the illusions of a theatre.

When the Theatre opened, twelve boxes only were subscribed for, for the season. It had been customary with my predecessors to publish, at the commencement of every season, a little book, specifying what boxes were taken for the season by the different subscribers,—a sort of Opera-box directory.* Some surprise was manifested that I had not continued this practice. I made such excuses as were in my power; I could not prevail on myself to allege the true reason, which was my fear of betraying the nakedness of the land, by making public such a

* In the Appendix will be found such an account of the boxes taken, as published for the season of 1789.

beggarly account of *nameless* boxes. Thus CH. IV.
situated, it may be thought that a manager 1821.
required confidence and a sanguine imagination to venture on his opening.

The next day came, and the next evening. I grew more and more nervous, though almost all the boxes were engaged for the night, and my friends gave me the warmest encouragement. Lord Fife, whom I have ever found generously ready to forward my interests, called upon me in Bond-street, two or three times. "You are doing excellently well," said he. "Every body praises you. Never fear, never fear!—We'll keep you up!" The Count St. Antonio and his Lady were equally kind. Still I was in fear; and when the time came to proceed to the Theatre, I would willingly, had it been possible, have retracted the step I had made.

There was an overflowing house; it was as full as it could be in every part. As I entered the stage-door, I met an intimate

CH. IV. friend, with a long face and uplifted eyes —
1821.

“ Good God, Ebers ! I pity you from my soul ! This ungrateful public ! ” he continued. “ The wretches ! — Why, my dear Sir, they have not left you a seat in your own house. ” Relieved from the fears he had created, I joined him in his laughter, and proceeded, assuring him, that I felt no ill will towards the public for their conduct towards me.

The story of ‘ La Gazza Ladra ’ was sufficiently familiar before the production of the opera. The incident on which it turns, is said to have been an actual occurrence ; and having been adapted to the stage in France, it speedily underwent several dramatic transformations in this country. As detailed in the opera, it is a pretty and affecting little history.

The music being new here, a great interest was excited to witness the representation ; an interest founded on the reputation already acquired by its author, Rossini, by his pre-

vious productions. ‘La Gazza Ladra,’ if not CH. IV.
1821.
the most pleasing, is one of the most scientific and best finished of Rossini’s works, and, in some respects, affords the best illustration of the peculiarities of his style.

The character of its music rendered this opera very difficult of performance, and a month was expended in getting it up, through the repeated rehearsals found requisite. The part of Ninetta, which was sustained by Camporese, was fortunately so prominent a one as to allow her the fullest scope for the display of her powers. Her countenance, fraught with a power of the most vivid change of expression, accommodated itself to every grade of passion, and in all its inflexions showed the operations of a mind capable of appreciating the niceties of character. Camporese never sang a character merely, without looking and acting it.

The performance was very successful; but the ballet was, perhaps, still more so, not

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1821.

from any intrinsic merit of its own, but from the unwonted excellence of the chief dancers, Noblet and De Varennes.

The exhilarating result of the evening had wholly changed my desponding temperament into one of high exultation and hope. To commence favourably seems a promise of success. I had done this, and was not wanting in confidence in the future progress of my undertaking.

The too great length of 'La Gazza Ladra' required it to be considerably shortened; it was, therefore, so reduced as to diminish the time of performance by more than half an hour. Though the music was said to be too much adapted to one strain of feeling, and wanted relief, the opera was so well received, that it continued to be played for many nights successively without any apparent loss of attraction.

On the fourth night of performance, March 20th, the King having signified his pleasure

to attend the Opera, (it being his first visit since his accession to the throne,) every preparation was made suitable to the event. The ante-room, and the box selected by his Majesty, were hung with satin, and ornamented with festoons of gold lace. The entire cost of the preparations was upwards of three hundred pounds. CH. IV.
1821.

Two boxes over the orchestra, on the left side of the second tier, having been selected by his Majesty, were thrown into one for his reception. The Earl of Ailesbury, Count St. Antonio, Lord Lowther, Mr. Ayrton, and myself, attended at the doors to receive his Majesty, who was attired in his Field Marshal's uniform, and attended by the Dukes of York, Clarence, Wellington, and others of his household. He addressed a few words to me on my undertaking, with his usual benignity, and entered the box among the loudest acclamations of the audience. These were repeated several times in the course of

CH. IV. the evening, and as often received by his
1821.

— Majesty with demonstrations of his satisfaction.

In the second scene of the ballet was represented a transparent rainbow, inscribed "*Vive le Roi*," surmounted by a figure of the Goddess Fame, in which Zara, the scene-painter, had exerted himself to the utmost. These circumstances, though of little moment in themselves, will not be unacceptable to many who attended the Opera at this time, and to whom the recalling of these things of fleeting record may be a source of pleasing and grateful remembrance.

On the evening of the 27th March was presented, along with '*La Gazza Ladra*,' a new ballet, '*Paris et C  none*,' composed for Albert, who made his first appearance at this time. It is not often that a performer establishes his reputation at a theatre to which he is a stranger, by one representation; but Albert's Paris displayed a buoyant elegance of motion

that at once stamped him in public estimation CH. IV.
1821. as a first-rate dancer. So great, indeed, was the admiration excited, that Mr. John Fuller shouted out from the boxes his satisfaction in the words “ You dance excellently well.” A *pas de trois*, in which Albert joined with Noblet and Varennes, was applauded to the skies.

The next opera performed was Paer's ‘ Agnese,’ which had been first represented here in 1817. This affecting piece was founded on Mrs. Opie's story of the ‘ Father and Daughter.’ Ambrogetti's acting of the part of Hubert, no one can forget who witnessed it. Perhaps it derived some additional effect from the contrast between the almost painful interest of the part, and the light and comic characters in which Ambrogetti usually appeared ; and still more from its being generally known that he had studied this horrible character in a mad-house.

Marinoni made her first appearance in

CH. IV.
1821.

the opera of 'Tancredi,' performed in April in this year. She took the part of Tancred, that of Amenaide being sustained by Camporese. Though the plot of 'Tancredi' is too meagre to interest as a drama, the character of Tancred is compounded of those high and enthusiastic qualities which give to a performer of sufficient power occasion to display the full enchantment of her art. In this power Marinoni was unfortunately deficient; her performance was consequently a failure. Her science and feeling were lost in the inferiority of her voice, which was wholly unable to fill the space of the house*. Besides, the remembrance of Bellochi was present, to complete, by force of contrast, the disadvantages under which the new *débutante* laboured.

The first performance in May was that of

* It is due to Mr. Ayrton to state, that he entirely disapproved of this engagement, and only acquiesced in it in compliance with the wishes of the Committee.

‘La Clemenza di Tito.’ The part of Sextus CH. IV.
1821. was filled by Camporese; and Mad. Albert, having accompanied her husband to London, though without any intention of singing here, was engaged to perform Vitellia. Curioni was the Titus of the piece; his first appearance at the Theatre.

At the Académie Royale, Madame Albert’s talents had acquired for her a first-rate reputation, but so widely do the French and the Italian opera differ in character, that her success with those accustomed to the latter, did not equal the expectation of her countrymen. Curioni hardly at that time raised an anticipation of the great excellence he has since attained; he was, however, much approved as the best tenor who had for some time belonged to the Theatre.

As Noblet’s engagement was drawing to a termination, her congé being about to expire, Thursday the 3d May was fixed on for her

CH. IV. benefit. The Theatre having been previ-
1821.
ously engaged for that evening, for the Concert of the New Musical Fund, the benefit was postponed until the following night. I forget the precise circumstance from which it arose, that a prohibition of the performance on the night newly agreed on, was issued from the Chamberlain's Office—probably it interfered with some of the Court regulations.

To get over this difficulty, Mr. Allan, as secretary to the Committee, and by their order, addressed to the Lord Chamberlain a letter, stating the reasons for the change of the night, and the inconvenience of any further postponement. In answer, the Earl of Ailesbury received the following letter from the Lord Chamberlain: it shows that beauty seldom pleads in vain.

“ MY DEAR LORD,

“ I have this moment (eleven o'clock) received your letter, which I have sent to the Chamberlain's Office, to

Mr. Mash ; and as Mademoiselle Noblet is a very pretty woman, as I am told, I hope she will call there to assist in the solicitation which interests her so much. Not having been for many years at the Opera, except for the single purpose of attending His Majesty, I am no judge of the propriety of her request, or the objections which may arise to the postponement of her benefit for one day, at so short a notice. I hope the fair solicitress will be prepared with an answer on this part of the subject, as it is always my wish to accommodate you ; and I remain most sincerely,

“ Your very faithful servant,

“ INGRAM HERTFORD.”

“ *Manchester Square,*
April 29th, 1821.”

The benefit took place on the Friday night, May 4th, though not without the occurrence of another obstacle, in the illness of Madame Albert, who should have performed Vitellia in La Clemenza, the opera originally announced, but which was now unavoidably withdrawn, and Tancredi substituted. This was of little moment, as, whatever the performance of the evening might be, Noblet was in so high favour with the

CH. IV.
1821.

CH. IV. public, as to ensure the success of her
1821. benefit.

‘Nina’ was the ballet selected, in which Noblet performed the part of that name. This character is the most replete with sad and affecting interest, that ever fell under my observation in the ballet. Nina is a young woman loving and beloved. An obstacle apparently permanent to the current of her affection, deprives her of her senses; and never was the touching sadness of the worst of maladies more truly delineated, than in the mute eloquence of Noblet’s performance. The madness of Nina is not the phrenzied excitement of ungovernable despair, but the melancholy estrangement of a mind retaining, in its ruin, the sweetness and benevolence of its unshaken state. In portraying the workings of this affliction, not a gesture, not a movement of Noblet was idly wasted. Every thing was true to nature—every thing contributed to the feel-

ing of the piece. Her countenance, expressive as her action was graceful, kept time to every inflection of feeling, and harmonized with all the speaking graces of her deportment.

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1821.

‘La Clemenza di Tito’ was again performed on the 15th May, when His Majesty once more visited the House, an event which was accompanied by a slight accident to the Lord Chamberlain, whose office it is on such occasions to carry the lights before the King, to His Majesty’s box. Going up the stairs, Lord Hertford, being of an advanced age, and infirm in health, stumbled and fell. He was raised up, his Royal Master manifesting the most anxious solicitude on the occasion. “I did all I could,” said His Majesty, “to prevent his accompanying me, knowing his infirmities, but Lord Hertford cannot be made to neglect his post.” This was literally correct; for though his Lordship was so much in-

CH. IV. jured, as to occasion his confinement at
1821. home for several days, he still, during the whole of the evening in question, remained in the anteroom, and insisted on performing the duties of his station, when the King retired from the House.

It had formed part of the engagement of Deshayes, that he should have a benefit with a new ballet. The new ballet I requested him to dispense with, as being necessarily attended with an expense which the receipts of the Theatre could ill afford. He refused to give up anything; '*Pas un morceau,*' was his reply. About the period of which I am writing, Deshayes, the period of his congé from the Administration of Paris having expired, was required to return, and all his endeavours by written communication with the Intendant of the *Théâtres Royaux*, to procure an enlargement of the term of his absence, having proved fruitless, I proposed M. D'Egville to the Committee, as the suc-

cessor of Deshayes, in the capacity of Ballet Master. This, however, was objected to; and at the earnest solicitation of the latter, I allowed him, retaining his engagement here, to return to Paris, and endeavour, by personal application, to procure an extension of his congé, an indulgence which his previous conduct little merited. He did so, and after an absence of some weeks beyond the time I had allowed him, succeeded in the object of his mission, and returned to his situation for the remainder of the season.

Yet though his prolonged absence had, if I had chosen to avail myself of the circumstance, in fact, cancelled his engagement as binding on myself, he objected to the abatement I was entitled to make from his salary, in respect of his unduly absenting himself. I was resolute in exacting this, but Deshayes resorting to the Committee, gained their aid in enforcing his demands, and I had no alternative but to submit.

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In order to introduce Signor and Madame Ronzi de Begnis to the stage of the Opera House, Rossini's 'Il Turco in Italia' was put in rehearsal, and produced on the 19th of this month. This opera is one of the happiest of the composer's productions, and far from deserving the censure cast on it by a musical amateur, who asked, "whether the title was meant to be descriptive of the composer?" Its characteristic was graceful liveliness, an attribute which probably induced Ronzi to recommend it for her début. She played Fiorilla, and her husband Don Geronio, a character which he most ably sustained. In this opera he met with a success which has continued to follow his performance ever since.

A new attraction now made its appearance at the King's Theatre, in the person of Fanny Bias, the most celebrated of Parisian dancers. She and Coulon were intended to replace Noblet and Albert; but Coulon, owing to an

accident, did not arrive until a few days after the intended time of his appearance. He <sup>CH. IV.
1821.</sup> had accidentally, when dancing at Paris, received a kick from a fellow-performer, the injury occasioned by which rendered a painful and severe operation necessary.

Fanny Bias was a dancer of the demi-caractère, perfect in those beautiful little half steps, which, more than any other, correspond to the epithet 'twinkling,' lavished by poets on the feet of graceful dancers. She well deserved Moore's encomium :

————— you'd swear,
When her delicate feet in the dance twinkle round,
That her steps are of light—that her home is the air
And she only *par complaisance* touches the ground

As Coulon's dancing was of a nature akin to that of Bias, it was to be regretted that their débûts could not be made together. A new ballet, which was intended to introduce her to the public, could not, unfortunately, be got ready in time, though it had been promised

CH. IV. ^{1821.} her, it being as much an object with a dancer as with a singer to come out in a part expressly adapted to the powers of the individual. A *Pas de Trois* by her, along with Noblet and Albert, produced rapturous applause.

Fanny Bias, notwithstanding the epithets applied to her by the poet before quoted, was not beautiful, nor had she the perfection of figure that belonged to Noblet ; but her feet were perfect models, and her style of dancing had an unstudied negligence about it that captivated one unawares.

The opera of 'Il Don Giovanni,' the most delightful of all Mozart's operas, having been fixed on for representation on the 24th of May, when Camporese was to take her benefit, the part of Ottavio had been assigned by Mr. Ayrton to Signor Begrez. This arrangement was considered by Torri as injurious to himself ; and the Committee, on his representation, decided that the part of Ot-

tavio should be given to him, a decision to which Mr. Ayrton, in whom, as director, the sole power of assigning the part undoubtedly resided, refused to give way. The Committee applied to me, and I was compelled, most reluctantly, to become a party to this disagreeable affair, and to request Mr. Ayrton to let Torri have the disputed part. Mr. Ayrton, however, considering that he stood before the public as the responsible manager of the performances, persevered in that cast of the characters, which appeared to him the best adapted to the talents of the company. I then applied to Begrez, requesting, as a personal favour to myself, that he would resign the part of Ottavio, disclaiming at the same time any intention of interfering with Mr. Ayrton's authority. I was, indeed, most anxious to have this affair settled, for I was given to understand pretty explicitly, that unless the wishes of the Committee were complied with, their countenance and support would be withdrawn from the Theatre.

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Signor Begrez sent the following answer to my note.

“DEAR SIR,

“In order to relieve you from all embarrassment upon the subject of the part of Don Ottavio, I beg to tender the resignation of my engagement at the King’s Theatre, and have the honour to be, dear Sir,

“Your most humble servant,

“BEGREZ.”

This, if it did not untie, did at least cut the knot; at the same time giving me a taste of the pleasures of management. It was productive of a more serious injury to the Theatre, in the loss of Mr. Ayrton, who, unwilling to hold a situation in which his plans were not approved by the Committee, resigned his office of director at the conclusion of the season.

‘Don Giovanni’ was, therefore, performed, Torri playing Don Ottavio. It is not the least of the many sources of Mr. Ayrton’s well-earned reputation, that this opera was

originally brought out by him in 1817, in op-
position to a vexatious cabal raised against it CH. IV.
1821.
by a principal performer, now no more, and
in despite of difficulties of many kinds, which
would have deterred a less decided and per-
severing manager. It filled the boxes and
benches of the theatre for that whole season,
and restored to a flourishing condition the
finances of the concern, which were in an
almost exhausted state. The plot of the
piece is one of the most familiar of such
stories, and had gone through every kind of
dramatic representation before Mozart se-
lected it as a stock on which to ingraft his
beautiful conceptions. And as a whole, says
Mr. Ayrton, in his preface to the Book of
the opera, "its praise is not limited by the
common attributes of good musical composi-
tion; it is entitled to the higher rank of fine
poetry; for not only are to be found in it
exquisite melodies and profound harmonies,
but the playful, the tender, the pathetic, the

CH. IV. 1821. } mysterious, the sublime, and the terrible, are distinctly to be traced in its various parts."

Ambrogetti was unwell, but, notwithstanding, performed the lively, profligate Don Giovanni, with his usual inimitable effect. Angrisani was Don Pedro ; and his deep tones were like the sepulchral notes of a funeral bell.

On this evening the Theatre was visited by her late Majesty, the Queen. A communication had been received from the Chamberlain's Office requesting that every attention might be paid to her accommodation. The centre box in the pit tier was, therefore, appropriated to her for the evening. If I remember, her Majesty was attended by Lady Hamilton.

On the last evening of this month Albert took his benefit, and Coulon having arrived, his first appearance was advertised for the 8th of June, but his indisposition rendered a postponement until the 12th necessary.

The time was now arrived when, according CH. IV.
1821.
to the arrangement originally made, Albert and Noblet should have returned to Paris. The favour with which they had been received in England, and the advantages they derived from their engagements, rendered them little solicitous to return, and the subscribers were, of all things, desirous of their remaining here. I naturally hesitated, for Coulon and Bias being engaged, it was making no little sacrifice to the wishes of the public to retain two sets of performers in the same department, at the rate of payment which they received: for Coulon and Bias were to receive for their engagements sums to the amount of upwards of one thousand two hundred pounds. I considered, however, that I had hitherto been well supported, and I was determined not to have my management reflected on as an *illiberal one*. This reasoning was not the most prudent in the world, but I was sanguine in my expecta-

CH. IV. tions, and the two sets of dancers were ac-
1821. cordingly engaged.

But though the performers themselves were well satisfied to remain in situations of far greater emolument than they could hope for at home, and the public were just as well pleased at having their pleasures so abundantly provided for, and though the manager's scruples had given way, there was another quarter in which very different feelings predominated. This was the Administration of the French Academy of Music, who were by no means delighted at the prospect of losing their dancers. A huge outcry immediately arose. The Count de Caraman, on behalf of the Academy, applied to the Committee to interfere with me, in order that the performers, whose congés had expired, might return.

The members of the Committee not being inclined to comply with this request, wrote in reply to the Count, that their power of

interference extended only to the pieces to be represented, and that they considered it out of their province to interfere in the arrangements between the manager and the performers. They added, that they had certainly employed their influence with the English ambassador at Paris, at the commencement of the season, to obtain the best artists from that city ; but it appearing that the Academy were not disposed to grant congés for London, even to artists for whose services the Academy had no occasion, the Committee had determined not again to meddle in that branch of the management.

The French made a fresh effort, by sending over the Baron de la Ferté to negotiate for the restoration of the absentees ; and, after considerable delay, it was at length agreed that they should remain here only until the end of the current season, and that two first and two second dancers should be allowed annually to come to London from

CH. IV.
1821.

CH. IV. the schools of the Academy ; the management
1821. { here engaging, in consideration of that allowance, not to bring over any performers contrary to the wishes of the Academy. A copy of this treaty will be found in the Appendix.

Coulon having recovered from the severity of his accident, made his début on Tuesday, the 16th of June. He wanted the grace of Albert, but in agility he was perhaps his superior, being of slighter make.

The ballet of 'La Jeunesse d'Alcide' was prepared for representation on the day of the coronation of his present Majesty, which took place on the 19th of July, but it was found impossible to get it up for performance before the 21st. The same night 'Le Nozze di Figaro' was performed. With the generality of audiences this is, perhaps, the most favourite of Mozart's compositions ; its playful and graceful lightness winning favour where its science and classic beauties might fail to strike.

Had Madame de Begnis been allowed to perform the part of Susanna, in this opera, her peculiar talents would have been displayed to great advantage; unfortunately for her, Camporese was stedfast in retaining all the parts, to which as prima donna assoluta, she was entitled.

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‘Le Nozze di Figaro’ was adapted to its operatic dress, from ‘La Folle Journée’ of Beaumarchais, and, as a dramatic representation, possessed more interest than the stories of operas can generally boast. As originally performed, the opera was found much too long for the customary time of representation, it having been composed for a theatre, where the opera alone forms the business of the evening. As now performed, it is therefore curtailed considerably from the limits of the original.

No fresh opera was brought forward this season, the remaining performances being repetitions of the pieces previously presented.

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‘Le Nozze di Figaro’ was repeated on the 18th August, as the concluding performance of the season, with the Ballet of ‘Paris et Œnone.’

The operas of the season (which was little more than a half one) had been as follows:—

La Gazza Ladra	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Agnese	- - -	<i>Paer.</i>
Tancredi	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
La Clemenza di Tito	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
Il Turco in Italia	- -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Il Don Giovanni	- -	<i>Mozart.</i>
Le Nozze di Figaro	- -	<i>Mozart.</i>

And the ballets, L’Offrande de Terpsichore, L’Impromptu Allégorique, Œnone et Paris, la Paysanne supposée, Nina, Finette et l’Eveillé, Le Carnival de Venise, La Foire de Smyrne, Les Jeux de Flore et Zéphyre, Alcide, and Le Seigneur Généreux.

The subsequent statement will exhibit, in one view, the principal engagements of the season.

FOR THE OPERA.			FOR THE BALLET.			CH. IV.
		£.			£.	1821.
Albert, Mad.	-	160	Albert,	-	1785	
Ambrogetti,	-	600	Bias,	-	675	
Angrisani,	-	600	Boisgerard,	-	263	
Camporese,	-	1650	Coulon,	-	624	
Curioni,	-	600	Deshayes,	-	930	
De Begnis, Signor,		600	De Varennes,	-	300	
De Begnis, Mad. Ronzi,		600	Farey,	-	187	
De Ville,	-	300	Gosse,	-	125	
Di Giovanni,	-	127	Hullin,	-	199	
Gattie,	-	117	Joly,	-	20	
Morandi,	-	84	Le Blond,	-	262	
Mori,	-	300	La Combe,		240	
Marinoni,	-	150	Le Febvre,	-	340	
Placci,	-	449	Montessu,	-	430	
Romero,	-	410	Mejanel,	-	112	
Righi,	-	50	Melanie,	-	475	
Torri,	-	500	Mengin,	-	350	
Vestris,	-	655	Noblet,	-	1537	
			Narcisse,	-	137	
			Toussaint,	-	200	

I had now an opportunity of looking around me, and considering, with some data to go upon, the tendency, as regarded my own affairs, of the adventure I had embarked

CH. IV. in. If the prospect was a favourable one,
1821. there was nothing to hinder my pursuing the course I had begun; if otherwise, I was at liberty to withdraw from it, as my lease was only for the season.

However, I was overwhelmed with congratulations, and every body rejoiced in *my success*; those who had advised me to undertake the concern, reminded me of the share they had had in procuring them this *bonne bouche*; and those who had dissuaded me, professed their pleasure in being proved mistaken judges. The newspapers announced the closing of the house, “after one of the most successful seasons ever known;” and, to judge by all that was said and written, I must have been looked upon as an incipient Croesus.

The simple fact was, I had lost above seven thousand pounds, the receipts having been thirty-two thousand two hundred and twenty-three pounds, while the expenditure

amounted to thirty-nine thousand two hundred and ninety-eight pounds *. CH. IV.
1821.

* The following abstract of the Accounts of this season will give an idea of the nature of the expenses.

1821.				1821.			
Receipts.				Payments.			
Boxes, -	£20,516	1	0	Engagements for			
Pit, -	9,714	12	0	the Opera, £8,636	7	6	
Gallery, -	1,017	15	0	Ballet, -	10,678	15	6
				Orchestra,	3,261	0	0
	31,248	8	0	Expenses of Be-			
Masquerade, Con-				nefits, -	833	3	3
certs, &c.	975	5	1	Directors,	1,737	12	10
				Secretary, Trea-			
	32,223	13	1	surer, &c.	840	8	0
				Servants, &c.	493	4	7
				Scene Painting,			
				Wardrobe, &c.	5,372	17	9
				Lighting,	1,281	7	11
				Rent, Taxes, and			
				Insurance,	3,878	13	6
				Repairs, -	205	12	8
				Licenses, -	119	3	0
				Upholsterers,			
				Printers, &c.	1,218	11	6
Balance, being the				Military Guard,			
loss on the Sea-				Police, and other			
son, -	7,075	5	0	Expenses,	742	0	1
	£39,298	18	1		£39,298	18	1

The total number of persons who attended the theatre this season, was calculated to be 82,632.

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It will be remembered, that, in addition to the ordinary expenses of the House, it had been newly decorated; alterations and additions had been made; the additional performers in the first ranks of the ballet engaged, and all the extra cost incurred, incidental to the re-opening and general *renouvellement* of such a concern. Nor had the regular expenses been limited, as the terms of the engagements will show.

Besides, full houses do not always imply large receipts. On this head, however, I would not dwell, as my first season was not diminished by a superfluity of orders, though the free list numbered to about two hundred and fifty, exclusive of the newspapers, which might amount to some fifty more.

It is generally understood, that a performer taking a benefit, defrays the expenses of the night, the manager not being supposed to pay where he cannot receive. I found this a somewhat illusory notion, for

though it was indeed stipulated, that the expenses should be borne by the performer, CH. IV.
1821. it not unfrequently happened that some unheard-of demand on another account rose up to intercept the amount of the expenses on their way to the treasury. Either the manager had (as it was alleged) broken some point of the treaty, or the singer or dancer did not conceive that he or she was called on to do something required to be done without a *douceur*: the conclusion in either case fell into the same key—the payment of the benefit expenses by the unfortunate *entrepreneur*. A manager is, in truth, an animal, whom it is supposed lawful and commendable to bleed at every vein,—a sort of target at which arrows may be shot with impunity.

I had experienced something of the difficulties of management, arising from the most ungovernable source possible—the self-love of the performers. This *amour propre* is a sufficiently self-willed principle in all cases,

CH. IV. ^{1821.} but in the natives of the stage, it even over-comes the love of money. The jealousies, the intrigues, perpetually at work behind the scenes of a theatre, cannot be detailed, any more than the fluctuations of the currents of air along the streets. They form the atmosphere of the place.

Let a new opera be intended to be brought forward. Signor This will not sing his part, because it is not prominent enough ; so, to enrich it, a gathering must be made of airs from other operas, no matter whether by the same composer or not, nor whether there be any congruity between the style of the original piece and the adventitious passages introduced. De Begnis, who, from some cause, or no cause, was disliked by the other performers, chose ‘*Il Turco in Italia*,’ for his own and his wife’s debut. Every obstacle was thrown in the way of its representation ; at last, all the best parts of ‘*La Cenerentola*’ were forced into it, to add importance

to the parts of the other performers. In-
deed, from the same cause, I never had CH. IV,
1821.
the full advantage of that valuable performer's services. If the sense of an opera is worth any thing, let the effect of this curious process be imagined. Do not let it be supposed that the manager has any power to decide in a case like this. Probably the opera is already advertised for performance, in which case "I will not play this part" must have its way. The opera being announced, must go on, and concessions must be made, as it cannot be represented without the performer in question.

Imagine the Director entering: "Sir, Mr. A. B. won't go on with the rehearsal." "Indeed! why not?" "He says you ought to do so and so for him, and he refuses to go on till it is done." While this is in discussion, behold an ambassador from the other performers. "The singers, Sir, say they can't wait at the Theatre all day; if the

CH. IV. arrangement with Mr. A. B. is not settled,
1821. they must go home." What is the refuge of the manager? If he remains steadfast, an appeal to the Committee is an engine of confusion quite at hand, especially if the complainant happen to be a *jolie danseuse*.

It is the office of the ballet-master to design the ballets,—to lay out in detail the story they involve, and direct the character of dance appropriate to each step of the piece. Here, as in the opera, a performer who imagines his part too meagre in opportunities of display, makes no scruple of introducing an excrescence in the shape of a *pas seul*, or whatever else may strike the fancy; and unless this is consented to, there is an end of the performance. Hence it is not very unusual to see a despairing lover express his grief in a pirouette, or a beauty, flying from pursuit, effect her escape in a minuet, so judiciously are these gratuitous additions often introduced.

The ballet-master, knowing too well that he cannot guard against these derangements of his productions, consoles himself by making his ballet as splendid and decorative as possible, in order to reap *some* credit from his performances. The expense of all this, not being borne by himself, is, of course, no object, though he *may* consult the manager as to the limits of expenditure. If he does this, it is, however, only to go beyond the prescribed boundaries in every way. A composer is to be engaged to furnish the music for the ballet. "Give him twenty pounds," says the manager; and the ballet-master forthwith goes to him, and says, "Write down thirty, and let the music for my ballet be so much the better." The day before the performance the composer presents his demand; being half as much again as the manager prescribed, he demurs; "Very well," says the composer, "then my music shall not be played to-morrow night."

CH. IV.
1821.

CH. IV. But no other music can be got in time, and,
1821. *par conséquence*—the conclusion is obvious.

Thus it is, that, from the *prima donna* to the guardian of the lamps, everybody has views to answer, and a reputation to support or extend, at the expense of the unfortunate individual who is blamed for every failure, but not credited for any success.

I was dining one day with Taylor, when the subject of capital punishments was started; during the discussion of which Taylor remained in a reverie. A gentleman at table strongly advocated the abolition of capital punishments in all cases.

“What would you inflict, then, on a criminal of the worst kind?” asked another.

“By —,” said Taylor, starting up, “make him manager of the Opera House. If he deserved a worse punishment, he must be a devil incarnate.”

Several of the performers, who had made engagements here during the first season,

now took their departures, and did not again visit the King's Theatre. Among these CH. IV.
1821. were Deshayes and Fanny Bias, neither of whom was permitted to return. The latter, I regret to say, died in the autumn of 1823. I saw her funeral as it was proceeding towards Père la Chaise. On being told whose remains were thus conveying to a scene so different from that where the best of her days had been spent, in diffusing pleasure and exciting admiration, I could not refrain from contemplations of a much more sombre cast than my habitual ones. But Paris is the place of places for the speedy evaporation of melancholy thoughts, and a passing sigh is all that is claimed from the spectator of the obsequies of the most accomplished or most talented. However, a friend who accompanied me, became more sentimental than myself, and drew a contrast between this scene and the gaieties of Brompton, at which so many of this poor

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girl's companions were present. This alluded to a fête which, in the fervour of incipient management, I had given at my residence at Old Brompton, at which many of the subscribers to the Opera were present, as also the principal performers. The members of my committee honoured me on this occasion with their company; and among my recollections connected with the Opera, I know none to which I recur with more undivided sentiments of pleasure than that which recalls the proceedings of this evening. An honourable Baronet, now no more, said to me, "Ebers, you give us the best of French dancers and French cooks, we will give you in return the best of English support."

Although the season, which to outward appearance had been a splendid one, had in reality been, as I have shown, to me a most unfortunate one, I did not regret having spared no efforts and no expense in my arrangements. I could not accuse myself

of having lost a chance of success by a wish to save a few pounds in any department. CH. IV.
1821.
The engagements for the ballet had alone cost ten thousand pounds, and I had given to the ballet an importance undoubtedly superior to what it enjoyed under any preceding management. In fine, I was not wholly discouraged, as my having to narrate the events of a second season proves.

Another arrangement was this season suggested for the purchase of the Theatre. This was, that I should buy it, and that the purchase-money should be advanced by those who were inclined to support the Opera, the advance-money having its repayment secured by mortgage of the concern. This design would certainly have been carried into execution, had it not been found impracticable on the same account by which the former plan was frustrated.

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Chambers's purchase.—Agreement with him for a new Lease.
 —Journey to Paris.—Death of Noblet's sister.—Engagements of Dancers. — Anatole. — Paul.—Mercandotti.—Varennes.—Volet.—Barrè.—Engagements of Singers.—Cinti.—Graziani. — Caradori. — Cerutti. — Cartoni.—Zuchelli.—David.—Petracchi.

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It may be thought that my experience of management during my first season, purchased at the price I paid for it, was sufficient for an individual whose appetite for such things was of ordinary character. And to myself, looking back at this time on the consequences of my undertaking, it may naturally appear that I was guilty of some degree of rashness in again attempting to pilot my bark through the same perilous seas, the effects of whose roughness I had already feelingly proved. And in this opinion most would concur with me, on being told that I now took the house, at a rent almost trebling in amount that which I had before paid.

Mr. Chambers, the mortgagee of the House, had for some time been in treaty with Mr. Waters for the purchase of the latter gentleman's entire interest in the concern, and the purchase was at last agreed upon at the price of eighty thousand pounds. Mr. Chambers thus became sole proprietor.

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The new owner showed that he had no intention of investing his capital idly, when he demanded from me the yearly rent of ten thousand pounds, on my applying to him to know on what terms he would grant a lease for two years.

In making up my mind again to become lessee and manager of the King's Theatre, I was in a great measure actuated by the usual spirit of speculators who continue a losing game, in hopes of retrieving their past losses. I had been fettered likewise in my previous experiment, by the brief term of my interest in the Theatre ; for it must be

CH. V. remembered that I had laid out money with
1822. no sparing hand in the establishment of a
concern, from which I was liable to be
driven at the end of the first season.

It appeared to me, that many of the expenses of my first season might be retrenched in my succeeding ones ; and I will not venture to say that I did not think myself more competent to manage the Opera advantageously than I might have been at the commencement of the season of 1821. Yet all my calculations in favour of the step before me, aided by the suggestions, if such they were, of vanity, did not hinder me from recoiling from the intention of taking the Theatre, when the enormous advance of rent which I have mentioned was first proposed to me.

The Lessor admitted that the sum was a large one, but pledged himself that I should not sustain any loss in consequence of the payments to be made to him, promising to

reduce the rent if the issue of my undertaking was unsuccessful. As Mr. Chambers was a man of integrity, and then of responsibility, I relied with full confidence on this assurance.

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The payment of this rent was to free me from all charges of taxes, insurance, and other similar expenses : still it was an overwhelming sum, and proved so in its effects.

Mr. Waters, hearing of the bargain that his successor in the ownership had made with me, thought it so advantageous a one to the latter, that he repented of having abandoned his interest in the concern, and filed a Bill in Chancery to rescind the sale made by him to Mr. Chambers. This suit is yet pending.

It being concluded, that I should again hold the reins of management, I lost no time in procuring such additions to the force of the Theatre as were by any means to be

CH. V. 1822. had. The season terminating in August, I left London in September for Paris, for the purpose of making engagements with the dancers, whom, according to the treaty made in the course of the past season, the Academy of Music were bound to allow to me. The Earl of Fife, whose good will and readiness to oblige were equal to the interest he took in the affairs of the King's Theatre, was already there ; and to his and Lord Lowther's exertions, the successful termination of several of the negotiations was mainly owing.

Immediately after my arrival at Paris, I waited on Lord Fife, and he settled with me the plan of our arrangements.

We visited the different schools of the Royal Academy to witness the dancers, who were shown up much in the same manner as if they had belonged to the soil, and as such were the property of the masters. The perfection acquired at these

schools is immense, and evidently unattain-
able in any country, where the same or
equivalent means are not employed. Nor
would these, perhaps, be sufficient without
the mental bias and physical temperament
which so remarkably adapt the French to
excel in the art. It did not appear that, in
selecting scholars, much attention was paid
to their personal endowments beyond those
tending to ensure their perfection as dancers.

Our chief business, and that which formed
almost the sole object of my journey, was
to ascertain the sentiments of the French
Administration, as to furnishing the dancers
stipulated for in our treaty. The Ministers
principally interfering in this department
were the Marquis de Lauriston and the
Baron de la Ferté. Both received the
applications made to them with the urbanity
of their national character, which, in the
former, expressed his real disposition towards
us, but was used by the latter, as we after-

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wards found reason to suspect, merely as a cloak to his real inclinations to frustrate our views.

Lord Fife having determined to remain in Paris until the end of the year, and kindly undertaking to attend to the business of the King's Theatre in the engagements there, I prepared immediately to return to London, where my presence was required. During my stay in Paris, I was not a little flattered by the encouragement held out to me in my undertaking by many English residents there, and, among others, by Lord Templeton, who, with his family, was residing at Meurice's hotel. I found his Lordship's family devoted lovers of music, and firm friends to the Italian Opera. Lord Fife's acquaintance with the administrators of the Académie Royale superseded the necessity of my availing myself of Lord Templeton's polite offer of an introduction to the Intendant of the theatres.

During my stay in the French capital, a sister of Noblet's was married. I accompanied Lord Fife; both of us were invited. The bride and her maids were splendidly attired. On our entering into the church, nosegays were presented to us; and, on our return, our path was strewn with flowers. The natural munificence of Lord Fife displayed itself in the valuable presents made by him on this occasion; diamond-rings, porcelain, and sets of elegant furniture were among his gifts. As customary on the continent on similar occasions, a grand dinner and ball were given, at which more than two hundred persons, chiefly relations of the young couple, were present. I regret to add, that a year or two after her marriage, the iron-work of a window, from which the bride was beholding a procession, gave way; she was precipitated into the street, and killed on the spot. Noblet was greatly affected by this unhappy

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CH. V. 1822. circumstance; she was for some time unable to appear on the stage.

After my return from Paris, Lord Fife very diligently applied himself to completing the arrangements. The first agreement made through his means, by the Académie, was as follows :—

For the first part of the season, ending on the 20th of April, Madame Anatole, M. Barré, as the dancers of the first class; and, of the second class, Mademoiselle Perceval, (who was to occupy the situation held in the previous season by Varennes,) and Mademoiselle Roland. For the latter part of the season, Mademoiselle Noblet, M. Paul, of the first class; and Mademoiselle Idalise and Mademoiselle Varennes, of the second.

Madame Anatole was the wife of a gentleman who was intended to be, and afterwards was, engaged as Ballet-master for this season, in the place of Deshayes, who,

as I have mentioned, had been recalled. CH. V
1822.
But the great object was to secure Paul and Madame Anatole, whose performances were of the most perfect kind. Paul was eagerly expected in England.

For this reason I was desirous, if possible, to commence the season with him. Another reason occurred for altering the arrangement proposed by the French Administration, in the unexpected engagement by Benelli of Charles Vestris, the husband of the celebrated Ronzi de Vestris, the sister of Madame de Begnis. He had hitherto been engaged at Naples; but the director of that theatre having, by a mere oversight, neglected to renew his engagement, Benelli took advantage of it, and immediately enlisted him into our corps de ballet, to the great indignation of his majesty the King of Naples, in whose favour the Vestrises stood high, and who did not at all acquiesce in the transfer. As this per-

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former was engaged for the second part of the season, it became the more necessary to strengthen the opening, partly by transferring Paul's engagement, if possible, to that time. Madame Ronzi Vestris was included in the engagement made with her husband. Twelve hundred pounds was the stipulated remuneration for their joint services.

The required alteration unfortunately could not be effected, the French being unwilling to part with a chief male dancer during the winter months, which, at Paris, form the most distinguished part of the season; and, besides those last-mentioned, it had been agreed that we should retain Albert, who was far superior to Paul, though the name of the latter was more novel, and therefore attractive. There was another performer whom we much wished to engage for the whole season—Mlle. Mercandotti.

During Lord Fife's residence in Spain, where he had served in the progress of the

Peninsular war, he had become acquainted with a widow of a respectable family, whose daughter evinced all the capabilities of a first-rate dancer, united with all the charms of Spanish beauty—the darkly bright and impressive beauty of romance. At his Lordship's recommendation, Mademoiselle Mercandotti and her mother visited England, where Maria, then only fifteen years of age, displayed, on a single evening, her powers in dancing the Bolero of her native country. This was at the Opera; she afterwards danced a very few times at Brighton, in the presence of the late Queen Charlotte, and never without unbounded applause. To perfect herself in her art, she became, by the same advice, a pupil in the schools of the Académie Royale de Musique. At the time of which I speak she had not made her public débüt in Paris, but all the city was in expectation of witnessing her performance, the announcement of which was presently made.

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After many fixings and postponement of the time of her appearance, she at last came out. Lord Fife wrote to Mr. Allan on her débût :—

“ Maria made her débût under great disadvantages, very much alarmed and wearied to death ; but the result was most satisfactory for an artist. I believe it is admitted there has not been so brilliant a débût in the memory of any one. The whole house rose and saluted at the end ; of course there are jealousies without number. The whole corps are displeased and agitated, and the only thing they can find to say is, that the house was packed, when it had only the night before been known certainly that she was to appear.”

That Lord Fife did not exaggerate, appeared from the communications of Lord Lowther and Mr. Bramsen.

“ The Spaniard,” says the former, “ dances again to-night. Her first débût

seems (from what I can collect) to have given general satisfaction. I think she will be a trump for you ; novelty, beauty, and talent attract what you, as a manager, would desire, namely, a full house.”

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Mr. Bramsen's letter was to the same effect.

The French journals varied in their accounts of the new dancer. Some extolled her, while others spoke coldly of her merits ; which had the more reason in their observations most of my readers can now judge for themselves. An engagement was made with her for the whole season ; but circumstances, connected with her engagement with the Academy, prevented her appearance in the early part of the season. I shall have occasion to recur to her in my subsequent remarks on this season. Her agreement was for eight hundred pounds.

Meanwhile, several minor engagements were effected. Varennes was engaged after

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a good deal of negotiation, for her demands were considered extravagant. To be sure she was in the right to make the best agreement she could. The amount of her engagement this season was five hundred pounds.

Some thoughts were entertained of engaging Mademoiselle Goss, whose half-brother, as a Parisian journalist, had some influence.

“Goss’s brother,” wrote Lord Fife, “is a great writer and editor here, and if you could let her join sometimes, it might assist us, by *puffing here*. The papers tried to run down Noblet, but they have been obliged to change their tone, by the general sense of all kinds and classes of people.”

The minor stations of the ballet were, however, so rapidly filled up, as not to admit of any engagement being made with her. She much wished to come, and both she and her mother were greatly disappointed at her exclusion. The latter wrote to me a letter,

deprecating any resentment on my part on account of her son-in-law's strictures on Noblet. Most assuredly I felt none, and my not engaging her daughter proceeded from causes quite distinct, as I have already said. The letter of Madame Goss concluded with a postscript in the true style of French pathos : “ *La feuille est arrosée de mes larmes.*”

Volet was engaged by the advice of an amateur of rank, and was fitted for the station she took. Mr. King, who obligingly assisted us with his exertions, recommended Aurelié, who was not engaged until the following season, in consequence of her place being previously filled up.

Anatole and his wife being engaged, wished to include a sister of the lady's, but the engagements already made did not admit of this.

Our negotiations across the Channel were attended with no little difficulty. A correspondent wrote from Paris—“ They are

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most impracticable about the dancers, as is natural, for they have only two objects in life here—to dance themselves, and to see others dance.”

The Academy at length decidedly refused to let Paul come to England, unless Albert were given up during the other's residence here. This we did not choose to agree to, being quite uncertain whether, if Albert once returned to the Grand Opéra, it would be possible to recover him; and Albert's extraordinary talent was far too highly esteemed here for me to allow him to leave us. I should have considered myself most fortunate any year that I held the Opera, to have been able to have procured the congés of Madame Anatole and Albert for the whole season.

We had had several men dancers offered us: Barré, Ferdinand, Coulon, and Richard, at our choice. Barré was selected, and agreed with for four hundred and fifty pounds for the first half of the season,

Two female dancers were also engaged : CH. V.
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Perceval and Roland. The former to receive for the half season two hundred and twenty-five pounds ; the latter for the whole season four hundred and twenty-five pounds.

The principal engagements for the Ballet, therefore, stood thus :—

For the first part of the season, Albert, Noblet, Barré, and Perceval.

For the latter part, Paul, Madame Anatole, Charles, and Ronzi Vestris, the two latter to commence on the 15th of March.

For the whole season, Mercandotti, Roland, and Varennes.

An almost entire change was made in the inferior departments, Mademoiselle Hullin's being the only name appearing in the circular of the last season and also of this.

The changes made in the list of singers were fewer ; Camporese and Ronzi de Begnis renewing their engagements. The new engagements with female singers were with

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Cinti, Caradori, and Graziani, of whom Caradori alone excited a permanent interest at the King's Theatre.

Cinti possessed all the qualities to form a good singer, in a situation where a less powerful voice would have sufficed than the Opera-house requires. Her knowledge was good, her taste simple and chaste, and her acting, if not strikingly excellent, was highly pleasing and unaffected. From this it may be gathered that she was unsuited to win great favour in Paris, where she had previously been engaged at the Italian Theatre. A noble patron of the King's Theatre had seen her, and recommended her to London, where her success was perhaps hardly equal to her merit, though a portion of public approbation was uniformly bestowed on her performances. She remained here only one season, after which she accepted an engagement abroad, and has not since been heard in this country. In person she was pretty, and in her manners pleasing and elegant.

Those who at all retain any remembrance of Graziani, will recollect her only as a singer of powers too limited to claim any more particular record than a passing mention. She was engaged by Benelli, at two hundred pounds, and this was far from the only instance in which I was misled by his representations. The only tolerable redeeming point in Graziani was her acting, which was not positively bad.

To pass from a singer of little, to one of uncommon merit, is so pleasant, that I hasten to speak of the engagement of Madlle. Caradori, almost with regret that the public is so well acquainted with her excellencies of character and talent as nearly to preclude the necessity of saying any thing here. She was engaged by Benelli, with the sanction of Count St. Antonio, who was then abroad, at the moderate salary of three hundred pounds for the season, only half as much again as was given to Graziani.

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This lady's father was the Baron De Münck, who was a German, though her mother, from whom she adopted the name of Caradori, was a native of Petersburg, and herself of Milan. Madlle. Caradori possessed so perfectly every qualification of a singer, considered without reference to the place in which she was now to appear, that in a theatre requiring less physical power she would probably have been pronounced faultless. This deficiency did not prevent her from being correctly estimated as a valuable acquisition to the theatre ; and with those whose object it is to be pleased rather than astonished, Caradori is a leading favourite. The mellow sweetness of her voice, so soft, so touching, was united with the truest expression of the feeling of what she sang, nor did she ever sing without calling forth emotions at once tender and powerful in all who heard her.

If Caradori's singing possessed thus much interest, her acting had no less, perhaps

rather from its unassuming grace and elegance, than from more decided characteristics. Her conception of character was just, and her performance always in keeping ; she never offended, and very rarely failed to please. Her natural talents were aided by a knowledge derived from the careful study of her art, which appeared in the judicious conduct of her voice, and her chaste and elegant style of execution. Caradori, independently of her musical knowledge, is a very accomplished woman ; she speaks and writes German, French, Italian, and English perfectly well, and draws most beautifully. It is comprising a great deal in a few words to say, that Caradori's public excellencies are only exceeded by the virtues of her private life.

These three newly engaged performers, together with Camporese and Ronzi de Begnis, filled up the female department of the opera ; it could not surely have been rendered much more effective.

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The male singers of the last season, who retained their engagements during the present, were, Curioni, De Begnis, Placci, Ambrogetti, and Angrisani ; to whom was added, in a subsequent part of the season, Begrez. The additions were Zuchelli, Cartoni, and Cerutti.

The last of these was another of Benelli's acquisitions, and of about equal value with Graziani. He sang ill, and acted worse ; probably few of my readers will remember him even by name.

Cartoni, a barytone, was better ; some qualifications, indeed, were required to justify the recommendation of Madame Camporese, at whose instance he was engaged. He had been a pupil of his own wife's, to whom, it was said, he was wholly indebted for his musical education.

But the most important by far of our engagements of male singers was that of Zuchelli, whose mother was an English-

woman, and who was himself born in this country, but left it while yet quite a child. He now made his first visit to England. The acquisition of this excellent singer, the first basso cantante known for many years in this country, I owed to a nobleman whose musical attainments are so well known, that the feeble testimony I could bear to them would be more than superfluous—I mean Lord Burghersh, then ambassador at Florence, where he engaged Zuchelli on behalf of the King's Theatre. Unfortunately Zuchelli, on his way from Florence to London, engaged himself at Paris as a performer at the Italian Theatre there, for the three seasons succeeding that of 1822. He was consequently lost to this theatre for a long period after this season, though he has since returned to it with talents and reputation alike undiminished.

As an actor, Zuchelli's talents were seconded by his personal appearance, which

CH. V. 1822. is favourable, and his utility was enhanced by his capability of performing with effect both comic and serious characters. At the Neapolitan Theatre of San Carlos, he had filled the station of primo buffo cantante, and was announced as such on his arrival here, which did not take place before June, in this year.

Many attempts were made to procure other singers of note, among whom were Donzelli, Rubini, La Blache, who, perhaps, even excelled Zuchelli; Mademoiselle Laurenzani, a contralto; Madame Lalande, a soprano; and David.

This last was considered the finest tenor in Europe, and the exertions made to engage him at the King's Theatre had so nearly succeeded, that his engagement was drawn out, and on the point of completion, when he was engaged for seven years by Barbaja, who at this time directed the Operas of Naples, Milan, Bologna, and

Vienna ; and here I may mention the disadvantage under which a manager of the opera in England labours in consequence of the superior facilities which the continental managers enjoy in effecting their engagements. Their theatres being, either wholly or in part, supported by, and under the immediate control of their respective governments, they are enabled to engage the most celebrated performers, for periods impracticable, where a theatre is conducted on the individual responsibility of a manager, carrying on his establishment on an annual lease, and dependant for its renewal on the caprice of the proprietor. This was my situation, and thus I was repeatedly prevented from effecting beneficial engagements. It was my experience of these facts, during my first season, that induced me to take the theatre afterwards for two years ; but this period also was too brief to enable me to enter into competition with the foreign managers.

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By the advice of Count St. Antonio, as well as of Madame Camporese, I had engaged from Milan the Chevalier Petracchi as director, a man who, though so well recommended, was a mere cypher as a successor to Mr. Ayrton, of whose ability in that situation I have already spoken. A distinguished correspondent in Paris did not fail to give me some intimations, gathered from what he heard there, of the true character of this Chevalier. He wrote me, —

“ — you have bought a pig in a poke in the bargain you have made with your Chevalier, who, I suppose, is now on his road from Milan. He seems well known to the musical people here. I have made inquiries of several, six or eight at least,—all tally in the same description, namely, that he knows nothing of music, and that he cannot even *blow*, *scrape*, or *thump* a tune upon any one instrument. They add, also, that he was never director of the musical department to the theatre at Milan, but was employed as a secretary and manager of the general affairs of the theatre, and *interfered with every thing but the music*. To be sure all is not truth that is uttered at Paris, but here is evidence bearing and consistent to one point. The desire to oust Ayrton was so manifest, that I did not even ask the most

obvious question, namely, whether the Count, in enumerating his various talents, spoke from his own personal knowledge, or the report of others. CH. V.
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“ I do not know what Curioni is about to do : a person tells me that he has most undoubtedly entered into an engagement at Vienna.”

The last paragraph alluded to a report, afterwards proved to be groundless, that Curioni, then in Paris, intended to abandon his engagement for the season at the King's Theatre, and accept one at Vienna. An application was, in consequence, made to the French administration, to withhold his passports, but they were never, I believe, applied for.

The representations made to me as above would, had the engagement with Petracchi not been concluded, have occasioned me to suspend it ; but it was now too late, and he came—and received his salary.

These were the engagements for the season, in making which, at least, as concerned the ballet, I was more than once

CH. V. 1822. taxed by my correspondents with caprice and fickleness in altering settled arrangements. But as some of the changes made arose from the occurrence of unexpected opportunities of making desirable engagements, as in the case of the Vestrises, and others arose from causes wholly beyond my control, I cannot charge myself with much versatility ; and I found the unavoidable difficulties of a manager's situation quite sufficient to deter me from increasing them by voluntarily undoing what had been once completed.

CHAPTER VI.

Opening of the season of 1822.—‘Le Nozze di Figaro.’—Carad	154
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It had been intended to open the season (which, with some difficulty, was made to commence on the 12th of January) with a new opera, by Pacini, ‘Il Barone de Dolsheim;’ but neither Cartoni nor Cerutti was arrived; it was, therefore, compelled to be postponed, and ‘Le Nozze di Figaro’ substituted. Caradori played the Page, and at once established herself.

The ‘Marriage of Figaro’ is the fittest opera in the world to supply a blank, being one of the very few that have maintained their

CH. VI. powers of attraction through innumerable
1822. representations.

The beautiful, and now familiar, air, ‘Voi che sapete,’ which, according to circumstances, has been sung by Susanna, the Countess, or the Page, was, on this occasion, assigned to the latter character, so well was Caradori’s power of expression adapted to give effect to it. It was encored, as was also the air, incidental to the character, ‘Non so più cosa son.’

Anatole, in his character of ballet-master, brought out, the same evening, ‘Pandore,’ a ballet founded, as the name designates, on the ancient story of Pandora’s box. The music to this ballet was much admired; it was composed, at the ballet-master’s desire, by a Mr. Schneitzhoeffter, for forty pounds. Madame Anatole was the Pandore of the piece.

‘Il Barone di Dolsheim’ was a failure. As a dramatic story its merits were certainly few

enough. The materials were the ordinary ones of a twentieth-rate romance ; a profligate youth, who is imprisoned by the orders of the great Frederick, a novel-reading young lady, a bullying corporal, are the prominent characters of the piece, which is filled up with sentimental common-places, love at first sight, and other machinery of the same standard, all very pretty, no doubt, but, at the same time, exceedingly stupid.

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The music was an imitation, in great measure, of Rossini, whose pupil Pacini was, but was found to want much of the grace and animation of that school. Like many modern operas, it was deficient in airs, but several of the concerted pieces were good ; it was strengthened by some compositions of Rossini, which met with great applause. Camporese and Caradori were the two sisters, Amalia and Batildi ; but these characters afforded little scope for the display of the powers of the singers. The Corporal was

CH. VI. performed by Ambrogetti, and in his hands
1822. became an effective part.

Cartoni made his first appearance, as the King, in this opera; pleased one party, and was disliked by another, though the 'contents' were by much the more numerous; and to me he always appeared a performer of respectable, though not first-rate talents.

The story of 'Il Barone di Dolsheim' had, a short time before, been dramatised at the Lyceum; it there formed a musical entertainment, which lived a brief life, and was put aside.

This novelty was succeeded by two of the last season's favourites, 'La Gazza Ladra,' and 'Il Turco in Italia,' but with too little change in the cast of parts to require notice. Cartoni took the characters of Fernando and Selim.

A new ballet, still a familiar acquaintance, 'Les Pages du Duc de Vendôme,' was also brought out at this period. Mercandotti

reaped more applause in this ballet than she had done before, though her reception had never been other than flattering. CH. VI.
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‘I Pretendenti Delusi,’ an opera buffa, by Mosca, was brought out early in April, and met with some success. The lead in this piece was taken by Ronzi de Begnis, the only female performer (except Graziani) in the opera. Emilia, the character sustained by her, is that of a young lady, who, besieged by the addresses of two disagreeable suitors (patronized, of course, by her friends) contrives to impress each with so unfavourable an opinion of herself, that they willingly abandon their pretensions, and assist in forwarding her marriage with a third gentleman, who is (of course again) her favoured lover.

Mr. Bochsa having brought forward Rossini’s ‘Mosè in Egitto’ as the commencement of the Covent Garden oratorios this year, the audience, accustomed to the weighty metal

CH. VI. and pearls of price of Handel's compositions,
1822. found the Moses as dust in the balance in comparison.

The oratorio having failed as completely as erst did Pharaoh's host, the ashes of 'Mosè in Egitto' revived in the form of an opera, entitled 'Pietro l'Eremita:' the title of 'Mosè in Egitto' being considered too sacred for an opera, Mosè was transformed into Pietro. This was as successful as the other had been unfortunate, and contributed as much as any of Rossini's compositions to establish his reputation in this country. The bounds of time and place, it must be allowed, were overstepped in this transformation, with a degree of boldness which is, at first view, rather startling. This, however, did not injure its popularity.

The music of the oratorio, with some additions from Rossini's other works, formed that of the opera.

The history of this opera may throw some

light on the character of Rossini's music, CH. VI.
1822. which is in its native element only when aided by the accidents of dramatic representation. It is too animated, too expressive of physical enjoyment to be divorced from its union with action and incident. 'Mosè in Egitto' was condemned as cold, dull, and heavy. 'Pietro l'Eremita,' Lord Sefton, one of the most competent judges of the day, pronounced to be the most effective opera produced within his recollection; and the public confirmed the justice of the remark, for no opera brought out during my management had such unequivocal success. It was, indeed, the strong point of the season, to strengthen which every effort was made. The subordinate aids of scenery and decoration were unsparingly resorted to, to give effect to this opera; and the nature of the story rendered these important.* A gentleman well known

* One part of the mechanical arrangements only failed. A body of troops pass (in our case, they only *ought* to have passed)

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1822.

in high life, indeed, not satisfied with telling me that I deserved well of my country, positively testified his admiration of the opera by avowing a determination to propose the Manager at White's !

The opera was found to be, in its original state, so much too long for representation, as to render a considerable reduction of its limits, and even a change in the conclusion of the drama, requisite.

It was in the character of Noraddin, the Egyptian Sultan, that Zuchelli first appeared at the King's Theatre, and laid the foundation

over a bridge, which breaking in the midst, they are submerged in the waves. These troops being made of basket-work, and pulled over the bridge by ropes, unfortunately became refractory on their passage, and very sensibly refused, when the bridge was about to give way, to proceed any farther ; consequently, when the downfall of the arches took place, the basket men remained very quietly on that part of the bridge which was left standing, and, instead of being consigned to the waves, had nearly been set on fire. The audience, not giving the troops due credit for their prudence, found no little fault with their compliance with the law of self-preservation. In the following representation of the opera, the bridge and basket men, which, *en passant*, (or *en restant* rather,) had cost fifty pounds, were omitted.

of his future reputation. His merits were at once acknowledged. His full deep tones, filling every crevice of the house, and the truth with which he expressed the various emotions which in turn agitate Noraddin, spoke an union of physical and mental powers leaving nothing to be wished for. His voice possesses a sweetness and flexibility unusual in a bass; and his taste and feeling are perfect.

Agia, the interesting and unfortunate Agia, could not have found a representative more capable of portraying her fears and her sorrows than Camporese, the soul of whose talent was expression. Ronzi de Begnis took Fatima, a part which, on her account, was enriched with some passages not strictly belonging to it. Indeed, the entire cast of this opera was one of the most perfect I remember. The mechanical department was equally complete, the opera requiring immense expense in its getting up.

CH. VI. Signor Zara, the scene-painter, was nigh
1822. overwhelmed with the load of preparation ;
and the stage-manager and his myrmidons
underwent the labours of a campaign.

The beautiful quartett in the second act, 'Mi manca la voce,' was accidentally the cause of a most inharmonious interruption of business. At a rehearsal of this opera, Camporese commenced the piece in her character of Agia. On uttering the initial word, Ronzi de Begnis, in a whisper not too gentle for Camporese to overhear, said, '*E vero !*' a remark which produced a retort courteous somewhat more than verging on the limits of decorum, though not proceeding to the extremity asserted by rumour, which would have been as inconsistent with propriety as with the habitual dignity and self-possession of Camporese's demeanour.

I was particularly fortunate at this time in persuading M. Albert to invent us a ballet ; and I feel proud that he first brought

out his beautiful 'Cendrillon' here, a ballet CH. VI.
1822. which he afterwards got up at the Grand Opera in Paris, with the greatest satisfaction to the Parisians. How could a ballet fail, the work of such an artist as Albert, and the music by the extraordinary Spaniard, Sor, who is known to be the most perfect guitarist in the world? He is now about to publish a work in Paris, on the guitar; on the teaching of which instrument his notions are quite original.

This was, perhaps, of all ballets ever performed at this Theatre, the one in which the greatest combination of talent was displayed: the dancers of the first part of the season not being yet gone, when the new ones arrived. 'Cendrillon' comprised their united exertions, and Albert, Noblet, Made. Anatole, and the Vestrises, at once appeared on the stage. Mercandotti, too, was there with her inimitable bolero.

To gratify at once the universal passion

CH. VI. for novelty, and the prevailing taste for
1822.

Rossini's productions, the opera of 'Otello' was next mounted. 'Otello' had been composed for the theatre of San Carlos, and the *libretto* was written by a Neapolitan nobleman. Any thing more cold, languid, and meagre than the drama of this opera cannot be conceived; but the music is redeeming. Perhaps, however, we have no reason to complain that, as Shakspeare borrowed the rubbish of Italian stories as the groundwork of his beautiful superstructures, the original owners should reclaim their property, and decompose the splendid *materiel* into its original dross.

Camporese, as Desdemona, and Curioni, as Otello, drew forth all the sympathies of the house; and the story is so fraught with thrilling interest, that all the labours of the Italian transformer could not divest it of its power. The music of this opera requires great skill and judgment in the singers, to make it pleasing.

The effects of the royal visit to the Opera this season were shown more powerfully even than in the last, by the overcrowded audience assembled. The opera of the evening was 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia,' at this day the most popular of Rossini's operas. He wrote it for the theatre at Rome, where it had great success, notwithstanding the composer had the disadvantage of succeeding Paesiello, who had already given an opera on the same subject, which was also adopted by Morlacchi. Not having been previously brought forward since my engagement of the Theatre, it had the force of novelty to recommend it, and certainly met with success.

This night's performance introduced Cinti, who played Rosina, notwithstanding the claims of Camporese and Ronzi de Begnis to the part, which were with no little difficulty got over. Perhaps they were only persuaded by an expectation that Cinti's voice, inferior in power to that of either of their own, would preclude her from being

CH. VI.
1822.

CH. VI.
1822.

much regarded ; an opinion which their experience of Caradori should have repressed. As an elegant performer and good musician, Cinti acquired a very respectable reputation, heightened a good deal by her personal advantages, for her figure was good, and her face of a kind one loves to dwell upon.

‘ Il Barbieri’ was succeeded by ‘ Le Nozze di Figaro ;’ which succeeds the other as the calm splendour of a beautiful evening succeeds the uneasy brilliancy of a sunshiny summer day. Some complained of the infrequent exhibition of Mozart’s operas at the King’s Theatre, and the overwhelming quantity of Rossini’s music. The justice of this complaint is not disputed ; but the public taste ran too strongly in favour of Rossini and his school to be resisted.

The first portion of the season, as arranged between us and the administration of Paris, having elapsed, a change had, some time ago, taken place in the ballet, and Paul and Noblet had succeeded Albert and Anatole.

A new ballet, 'Le Chaperon Rouge,' was got up in July for their joint benefit. Paul had been wonderfully applauded in his performances; in his physical capabilities he exceeded Albert; and actually seemed to fly as he bounded from the stage, so light and zephyry were his motions.

No new opera was brought forward this season, but 'Don Giovanni' was revived in July, with a cast of characters almost entirely new, the only ones which were filled as they were in the previous season being 'Zerlina,' by Camporese, and 'Il Commendatore,' by Angrisani. Zuchelli was the Giovanni of the piece. Zuchelli appeared, perhaps, to more advantage in other parts than in this; the spirited and inimitable performance of Ambrogetti in this character was still too recent in the minds of the audience to be forgotten, though the superiority of Zuchelli, as a first-rate singer, was such that he could have little to fear.

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1822.

CH. VI.
1822.

Begrez supported the character of Ottavio, about which there was now no longer any dispute, his rival Torri not being engaged this season at the King's Theatre.

Ronzi's performance of Donna Anna may be remembered by those who frequented the Opera this season. In some passages of the drama she was unequalled; and her struggle with the profligate Juan, in the first act, was a scene of splendid animation.

This opera was the concluding performance of the season, which terminated on the 10th of August. The operas of the whole season were—

Il Barone di Dolsheim	-	-	-	-	<i>Pacini.</i>
I Pretendenti Delusi	-	-	-	-	<i>Mosca.</i>
Il Turco in Italia	-	-	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
La Gazza Ladra	-	-	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
Pietro l' Eremita	-	-	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
Otello	-	-	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
Il Barbiere di Siviglia	-	-	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>
Le Nozze di Figaro	-	-	-	-	<i>Mozart.</i>
Il Don Giovanni	-	-	-	-	<i>Mozart.</i>

The preponderance of Rossini's productions in this list has already been observed on.

The ballets in addition to those which CH. VI.
1822. have been mentioned, were 'Le Carnaval de Venise,' and 'C  none et Paris,' in the latter of which Paul made his d  but.

The house had been well attended during the season, and the masquerades* occasionally given in the Theatre had produced something, but the expenses of the house were so enormous, owing, in a great measure, to the extravagant amount of rent, as far to

* Among other occurrences at the Opera House, I gave a ball this season for the relief of the distressed Irish, at which an awkward circumstance took place; which, however, would hardly be worth recording, but for the sake of a celebrated name which was brought into question. A Mr. V. had bought two tickets, one of which he disposed of to Colonel —, and the other he exchanged at my library for a lady's ticket. The Colonel's pocket having been picked in his way home, directions were given that his ticket, bearing Mr. V.'s name, should be stopped, if presented, at the masquerade; the other ticket, which Mr. V. had exchanged with me, and which also bore his name, not being at the moment thought of. This latter ticket had been sold, and, as it afterwards appeared, to Belzoni the traveller. The ticket being challenged when he presented it, Belzoni drew his sword, threatening to make mummies of those who stayed his progress. He was admitted, and an explanation afterwards took place.

CH. VI. ^{1822.} exceed the income. Had the house been let
to me at the same rate as in the preceding
year, I should have been a gainer of some
few hundred pounds; as it was, the loss on
the season amounted to upwards of five
thousand,—the receipts amounting to forty-
one thousand five hundred and eight pounds,
and the expenditure to forty-six thousand
eight hundred and seventy-six.

In consequence of this loss, I found it
impossible to discharge the full amount of
the enormous rent with which I was bur-
thened. Two-thirds were paid, and for the
remainder Mr. Chambers accepted my notes.
Nor do I think that I should ever have been
called on by him for this amount, but on his
affairs becoming deranged, those who repre-
sented him did not conceive themselves
bound by his verbal engagement, and the
securities were enforced and the money paid.

At this time Ambrogetti left England.
He was brought here in the year 1817, by

Mr. Ayrton, without property, and realized CH. VI.
1822.
by the exertion of his talents sufficient to afford him a competency in his own country. He did not, however, wholly abandon the stage, as he accepted an engagement at the theatre at Barcelona; and on the termination of this engagement, and after a temporary retirement, (which gave rise to the report of his having embraced a religious life,) he appeared again as a singer, and, I believe, with renewed powers.

The following were the chief engagements of the season:—

FOR THE OPERA.					£.
Ambrogetti	-	-	-	-	350
Angrisani	-	-	-	-	550
Begrez	-	-	-	-	400
Camporese	-	-	-	-	1550
Caradori	-	-	-	-	300
Cartoni	-	-	-	-	700
Cerutti	-	-	-	-	150
Cinti	-	-	-	-	500
Curioni	-	-	-	-	900

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	£.
De Begnis (Signor and Madame) - -	1800
Di Giovanni - -	180
Graziani - -	200
Morandi - -	84
Placci - -	600
Righi - -	50
Zuchelli - -	500

FOR THE BALLET.

Albert - -	1200
Anatole - -	1300
Barré - -	450
Bertrand - -	140
Boisgerard - -	250
Brissac - -	80
Gosselin - -	100
Hullin - -	250
Le Blond - -	250
Mercandotti - -	800
Noblet - -	675
Paul - -	1200
Perceval - -	225
Roland - -	425
Spitalier - -	245
De Varennes - -	500
Vestris (Mons. C. and Madame) - -	1200
Volet - -	280

CHAPTER VII.

Engagements for 1822.—Aurelié.—Armand de Forges.—Falcoz.—Aumer.—Madlle. Clerini.—Placci.—Signora Borgondio.—‘La Donna del Lago.’—‘L’Offrande aux Graces.’—‘Alfred.’—Elopement of Mercandotti, and her marriage with Mr. Ball.—‘Elisa e Claudio.’—Garcia.—‘Aline, Reine de Golconde.’—Mademoiselle Aimée.—‘Ricciardo e Zoraide.’—‘Matilde e Corradino.’—Close of the season.—Enumeration of Performers.—Receipt and Expenditure of the season.—Agreement with Mr. Benelli for transferring the concern to him.—Camporese’s departure from England.—Her regret at leaving it.—List of the engagements of the season, 1823.

THE proposition made in October 1822, by CH. VII.
the Administration at Paris, in fulfilment of 1823.
our treaty of July, 1821, was to allow us
for the first half of the ensuing season,
Coulon, and Madame Anatole, and for the
second half Ferdinand and Noblet, as first
dancers. A change was subsequently made
in both parts of the arrangement. Aurelié
was substituted for Madame Anatole, for
the beginning part of the season, and
the prospectus of the Company, which

CH. VII. 1823. was issued in November, was, therefore, formed accordingly; but in December, I concluded an agreement with Madame Anatole, who had become a great favourite during the previous season, for eight hundred and twenty-five pounds for three months, to commence in the middle of the season, her husband consenting to this sacrifice, as he called it, on account of the greater satisfaction of living in London during this period, than at any other part of the season. The original demand was twelve hundred pounds.

Charles and Ronzi Vestris, Mercandotti, and Varennes, renewed their engagements.

The first new engagement was that of Mademoiselle Aurelié, from the French Academy. She danced with great skill and precision. She had been recommended to me the previous season, but not having room for her, she was not then engaged.

Armand de Forges, *premier danseur* at

the Theatre of Bourdeaux, made his *debut* CH. VII.
1823. here this season, with success. These, with Falcoz and his wife, two dancers from Lisbon, completed the principal novelties in the Ballet for the season.

Aumer was engaged as Ballet-Master, a capacity in which he had gained a great repute at the French Academy.

On the whole, we commenced with tolerable strength in the Ballet, though a good many changes had been made. Barré, Roland, and Perceval were not re-engaged, though the father of the latter assured me, by letter, of his daughter "being grown in talent, and her physiognomy is now very handsome."

The 'Clemenza di Tito' was the opening performance of the season, not perhaps the most attractive that might have been selected, being the last and not the best of Mozart's compositions. But we were compelled to consult the state of the company;

CH. VII. and though the leading departments were
1823. well filled, continuing much the same as in the preceding year, we were yet deficient in performers to fill the secondary and inferior parts.

The cast of the Opera on this night was as follows :—Tito, *Curioni* ; Vitellia, *Cara-dori* ; Sesto, *Camporese* ; Servilia, *Clerini* ; Annio, *Graziani* ; and Publio, *Placci*. Neither of the two first were well calculated to act, however well they sang their parts. Vitellia, indeed, belonged to Ronzi de Begnis, but her ill health prevented her appearance in the character.

Clerini was a Frenchwoman, who had thus translated her name from Le Clerc, her original appellation. Servilia did not shine in her performance ; except her face, indeed, she possessed no attractions.

Graziani had been retained on the recommendation of certain of the patrons of the opera ; she acquired this season as much

favour as in the preceding. Less it could not be. CH. VII.
1823.

As the successor of Angrisani, Placci was unfortunately situated; he had, however, a good voice, and was not a positively bad actor. Moreover, he was a useful man, and willing to be of service wherever he could—a rare qualification, the value of which is well known to managers. It had been understood that Camporese was to take her leave of England, at the conclusion of the last season; the offer of nineteen hundred pounds induced her to remain during this. Her place would with difficulty have been supplied; her voice, though in some respects defective, was competent to the Theatre, and her power of pleasing as an actress unequalled.

‘La Clemenza’ was followed by ‘La Gazza Ladra,’ which introduced Porto to this stage. His execution was by no means inferior, and his voice gave great satisfaction,

CH. VII. notwithstanding the difficulty of Rossini's
1823.

— bass parts, which cannot be effected by many. Few bass voices that are likely to be met with, will ever combine the depth of tone, and the flexibility to accomplish them. Porto was engaged by Benelli, from the Italian Theatre at Paris, where he was engaged as *primo buffo*.

The next performance was that of 'Tancredi,' Reina and Signora Borgondio having now arrived. The former, a tenor, was from the Scala of Milan, and was a good actor. As a singer, he was much inferior to Curioni, but sustained with credit the part of Argerio, in which he débuted.

Borgondio, who played Tancredi, was, I think, under-rated. But she had to undergo a comparison with past excellence, and the public mind was 'still harping' on Bellochi, who, assuredly, was admirable in this part. The new *débutante* was not young, a sad

evil, and her voice had lost some of its CH. VII.
1823. power in both its extremes. Her voice was a contralto, and, within a certain compass, sweet and mellow; her science was correct without being very extensive, and her style simple. She remained here for a single season only, for which she received four hundred pounds. In her anxiety to be under no disadvantage in her private studies, she brought with her a piano-forte from Italy, not supposing such an instrument, in any perfection, was to be had in England!

‘La Donna del Lago’ was brought out in the February of this year. Some degree of pre-attraction was attached to the name of this piece, which spoke its kindred with one of the most beautiful productions of a writer so well known and estimated, that epithets of praise joined to his name would be ridiculous.

Of the story of the Lady of the Lake, ‘La

CH. VII.
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Donna del Lago' exhibited as many features as can be expected in any similar case. It gave something like an outline of the incidents of the original; and the names of the characters, and the scene of their action, were somewhat Scotch. But to expect that Signor Tottola, the manufacturer of this drama, should seize anything of the spirit and colouring of the original, the feeling, deeper by its simplicity, with which the character of our Ellen is so ripe, would imply a degree of faith, which a brief experience of the reality would suffice to dissipate.

And yet no poem, perhaps, in the whole course of our modern literature, is, as a poem of action, more fraught with the requisites of dramatic interest, and situations for dramatic representation, than the *Lady of the Lake*. The country, the time, the characters, are so essentially those of romance, that it would seem a simple task to transfer to the stage actions and feelings which come before the

mind with the vivid reality of an actual performance. CH. VII.
1823.

It appears injudicious to adopt for the scene of a drama, intended to be conveyed in the language of a foreign country, the near neighbourhood of the place where the performance is to be exhibited. The inconsistency between the language and idioms of the writer and those of the scene he intends to adapt his piece to, are by this means brought under more immediate observation, and before judges capable, from personal habit and knowledge, of perceiving and feeling all the solecisms of the dramatist. To an English audience it matters little whether the details of an 'Otello' or a 'Pietro l'Eremita' be in keeping with their supposed scenes of action or not; but our sympathies are too closely interwoven with the Scottish Lady of the Lake to endure, without jarring, any violation of the costume of the piece. We incline to laugh when the fierce Roderick Dhu deserts

CH. VII. the creatures of his own superstition, to in-
1823.
voke "le furie d'Averne."

However, the story of an Italian opera is, and ever must be, matter of secondary import; and except from the force of associations, such as are attached to 'La Donna del Lago,' will never greatly either attract or repel. The music is all in all; and the music of this opera bore up its defective companion. And as the skill of the scene-painter has its effect with a proportion of every audience, this opera had an additional aid, in the opportunities it afforded to Signor Zara of displaying his capabilities.

The opera itself may be said to rank among those productions on which Rossini's fame, as a composer of tender imagination and splendid realization, must depend. It pleases and interests, until at last we feel delighted. The opening air, 'Oh matutini albori,' is a fair specimen of the whole. But the airs in this, as in many other of the same

composer's works, are of but secondary import, CH. VII.
1823.
the choruses and concerted pieces being too
paramount.

The part of the simple and interesting Ellen was performed by Ronzi de Begnis with a just conception of the character, and a perfect adherence to its feeling. Madame Vestris supported the part of Malcolm, for which her voice was well adapted. This lady had been again engaged, to the satisfaction of every body, for Vestris was then, as now, an universal favourite. The other parts were cast thus: Giacomo V., *Curioni*; Douglas, *Porto*; Rodrigo, *Reina*; Serano, *Di Giovanni*; and Albina, *Signora Clerini*.

A good deal of care was used in mounting this opera. The characters were clothed in the tartans of their various clans, according to the information received from natives of Scotland, who were consulted for the purpose. The heron's plume and golden chain of the Scottish King were lent to me by a lady of distinguished rank.

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The Lady of the Lake was at this time performing at Drury Lane as an oratorio, consisting chiefly of Rossini's music, adapted to portions of Sir Walter Scott's poem, but without much success.

'La Donna del Lago' continued to be performed without intermission for some time, during which Aumer, the new ballet-master, brought forward his grand ballet of 'Alfred,' prepared for the Great Opera at Paris. He had previously got up 'L'Offrande aux Graces,' and 'La Noce du Village,' the former a most pleasing divertissement, and the latter a lively and interesting rural piece. 'Alfred' was, however, Aumer's great effort, and no pains and no expense were spared to give it effect. The ballet is founded on the tradition of Alfred's visit to the Danish camp, a familiar incident in the monarch's life. The scenery was chiefly new, and the dresses and decorations were no testimony of mean economy on the part of the management. The

popularity of the ballet, in which the dancers CH. VII.
1823.
exerted themselves to the utmost, was un-
bounded. At the conclusion of its first night
Aumer was called for by the audience*.

Mercandotti, who had been gaining ground
till she was at the height of public favour,
on the first night of this ballet (the 8th of

* The following tribute of applause, addressed to Aumer,
appeared in one of the morning papers on the performance of
'Alfred.'

THÉÂTRE DU ROI.

Beaux jours de Dauberval, Didelot, et Noverre,
Jours long tems regrettés, surtout de l'Angleterre,
Enfin vous renaissiez ; et sortant du tombeau,
L'art qu'on croyait péri refleurit de nouveau.
Aumer le fait revivre ; et sa main créatrice
Loin d'orner ses sujets d'une beauté factice,
Habile à leur donner un costume et des mœurs,
De la nature seule emprunte ses couleurs.
Des siècles fabuleux vient-il tracer l'image ?—
Des Grâces et des dieux il parle le langage.
D'une fête champêtre offre-t-il le tableau ?
Tout est simple, naïf, sous son heureux pinceau.
Mais si du Grand Alfred il entreprend l'histoire,
Il le peint tel qu'il fut, bon, sage, et plein de gloire ;
Et Londres, a ce portrait d'un monarque si cher,
Court en foule applaudir au chef-d'œuvre d'Aumer."

Morning Post.

CH. VII. March) took the part of the king's page in
 1823.
 this performance, and looked and danced it admirably. It was impossible to be more admired than Mercandotti was, nor have her charms escaped a record in fashionable literature.

“ Sweet Mercandotti, if such ladies
 Could often be invoiced from Cadiz,—
 Such raven locks, such sparkling eyes,
 Were voted in the home-supplies;
 Such fairy feet, such taper fingers—
 They'd make the fortune of the bringers;
 E'en I, who dread the name of wife,
 Might order—per the good ship F——. *”

Among the number of hearts on whom the bewitching eyes of the beautiful Spaniard had made an impression, was that of a gentleman well known as a man of wealth and fashion, Mr. Hughes Ball. This worshipper, like

* ‘*May Fair* ;’ a poem, the authorship of which, after travelling a round of fashionable writers, seems at last to have settled down on a worthy divine, whom one would hardly have suspected of being guilty of so knowing a production.

many others, had long and assiduously de- CH. VII.
1823.
voted his attentions to Mercandotti; but she
was one of those rare examples that now and
then occur to ornament the female biography
of the stage, who, in a situation of all others
the most trying to the best virtues of woman,
preserve unsullied the integrity of their re-
putation.

On the 16th March, I received a note in
the following words :—

“ MONSIEUR,

16 *Mars*, 1823.

“ Ma santé étant extrêmement dérangée, j’ai
consulté mon médecin, qui m’a conseillé d’aller à la campagne
pour passer quelque temps; je m’empresse de vous en
prévenir, afin que vous puissiez donner mon rôle à une
autre personne.

“ J’ai l’honneur d’être,

“ Monsieur,

“ MARIA MERCANDOTTI.”

The honour of being Maria Mercandotti
was one which she did not long retain. How-
ever, this plea of illness, which I had at the
time no positive reason to doubt, was on the
next night of performance stated as the

CH. VII. reason of Mademoiselle Mercandotti's non-
1823.
appearance in the ballet.

It was soon made public that Mercandotti had a more agreeable cause of absence than ill health, and that she had accepted the hand offered to her at length by Mr. Ball. That gentleman had, on the day before I received the above note, been elected a member of Brookes's; had been there at eleven o'clock; and going thence home, had, the same night, set out for Banff, whither the lovely Maria and her mother, in another carriage, were also bound. The marriage, as every body knows, took place; Mrs. Hughes Ball is well known as an amiable and estimable woman, whose manners and disposition ornament the society in which she moves*.

In consequence of Mercandotti's withdrawal, her part in the ballet of Alfred was afterwards taken by Mad. Ronzi Vestris, who

* The papers were, as usual, prompt in taking up the subject of the elopement, and epigrams and jeux-d'esprit without num-

was succeeded in her own character by Va-
rennes. CH. VII.
1823.

Early in April was brought out the opera of 'Eliza e Claudio,' a semi-serious opera, by Mercadante, a Neapolitan, and follower of the Rossini school. The dramatic part of this piece was worthless, and probably contributed to make the music less highly estimated than it would otherwise have been. It involves

her appeared at the time. One was a version of her note to me, and ran as follows:—

"Sir, being a-miss et ma santé dérangée,
Mon médecin declares qu'il-y-a quelque chose à changer;
I suppose he means air—à la campagne je vais,
So dispose of my rôle à quelque autre, I pray,
But Mamma ne vent pas que je sois paresseuse,
Bids me go to a Ball, and I cannot ref-Hughes."

Mr. Ball's name was tortured exceedingly by these *fugitive* poets. Thus they wrote:—

"Mercandotti's gone; well, where is the wonder,
And why should we wish her last step to recall?
The light-footed nymph has committed no blunder,
The Dancer has only gone off with the Ball."

Again:

"The fair damsel is gone, and no wonder at all,
That, bred to the dance, she is fond of a Ball."

Enough of this.

CH. VII. the story of a young nobleman, who, having
1823. clandestinely married a female in humble
life, is, of course, required by his father to
marry another woman, which woman, equally,
of course, is attached, unknown to *her* father,
to a meritorious youth of her own selection.
After a great deal of distress and difficulty,
every thing is, as usual, arranged by mutual
discoveries, forgiveness, reconciliation, and
so forth.

Though the music of this opera was not
generally liked, there were not a few, includ-
ing judges of established note, who con-
sidered it as deserving of greater encourage-
ment than it had the fortune to experience.
It certainly had faults, and perhaps numerous
ones, but they were such as are incident to
the productions of a young composer, and it
was not destitute of beauties. It was, in-
deed, received, on a second performance, with
more favour, but still with such qualified
approbation as to render its repetition un-

desirable. It was therefore withdrawn, without having greatly answered any end, other than strengthening the reputation of Caradori, whose performance of the part of Carlotta was much and deservedly applauded. CH. VII.
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The unsuccessful novelty being superseded, was followed by repetitions of 'La Donna del Lago' and 'Otello.' At this period, an engagement was concluded with Signor Garcia, a tenor of great power, taste, and an excellent musician. He had been made known to an English audience in the year 1818, when he had an engagement under Waters's management, and left behind him an impression which made his return welcome to all who remembered his former visit. His voice was now a little reduced, but not so as to prevent his being a most effective singer. Aumer produced a lively ballet, under the title of 'Aline, Reine de Golconde,' in which Anatole, the period of whose engagement had now commenced, made her appearance,

CH. VII. ^{1823.} to the very great gratification of the lovers
of the ballet. With her came Mademoiselle Aimée, with whom an agreement had been made for the remainder of the season, at the salary of two hundred and forty pounds.

‘Ricciardo e Zoraide’ was the next opera brought out. It had been composed by Rossini for the Neapolitan theatre, and performed with indifferent success at Milan: it was one of those frequent pieces in which the music had to contend with the evil influence of a plot equally improbable and uninteresting. Central Africa is not a country fraught with poetical associations; and though (in a romance) there is nothing very extraordinary in a dark-skinned conqueror falling in love with a captive, and she preferring another captive, the introduction of a French ambassador at the court of his African majesty is a novel mode of bringing about the denouement of the story. The music, along with a good deal of self-imitation,

contains beauties sufficient to entitle it to CH. VII.
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more than an ephemeral existence : many passages are pleasing, and many capable of rousing the deeper feelings which Music, in her strength, seeks to call into play.

Whatever merit was due to the composer for the success of the opera, the performers at least were entitled, on its representation at the King's Theatre, to share the praise. Camporese performed the part of Zoraide the captive, and Vestris that of Zamira, who is attached to Agorante, the conqueror. The other parts were sustained by Garcia, Curioni, Porto, Reina, and Graziani.

De Begnis and his wife chose for their benefit this season, a new work of Rossini's, 'Matilde di Shabran e Corradino ; or, the Triumph of Beauty.' The variety of incident and situation in this opera rendered it, as a drama, more interesting than usual ; and it afforded scope for the display of many and various passions. Rossini attached to it

CH. VII. ^{1823.} much beautiful and brilliant music, alternately addressing itself to the gayer and the sadder emotions of the mind, the full effect of which was felt on its representation at the King's Theatre, where De Begnis exerted himself in getting up the opera in perfection, and his wife gave reputation to Matilde by her admirable performance. With the exception of Camporese, all the principal singers took parts in this opera.

No other novelty was brought out this season, the remaining performances being repetitions only of the previous ones, terminating with 'Ricciardo e Zoraide.' The Opera performances had been

La Clemenza di Tito	-	Mozart.
Le Nozze di Figaro	- -	Mozart.
Elisa e Claudio	- -	Mercadante.
La Gazza Ladra	- - -	Rossini.
Tancredi	- - -	Rossini.
La Donna del Lago	- -	Rossini.
Otello	- - -	Rossini.
Ricciardo e Zoraide	- -	Rossini.
Matilde e Corradino	- -	Rossini.

And the ballets, L'Offrande aux Graces, Le Carnaval CH. VII.
de Venise, La Noce du Village, Les Pages du Duc de 1823.
Vendôme, Alfred, Aline Reine de Golconde, Justine et
Lisette, and Alphonse et Léonore.

The season had been well supported, especially during the latter part, though less so than in the preceding seasons. Still the enormous rent swallowed up every thing that might otherwise have been placed to the manager's credit ; and the loss on this season exceeded nine thousand pounds : the expenditure being forty-six thousand four hundred and forty-eight pounds ; whilst the receipts amounted only to thirty-seven thousand two hundred and forty-one. So general, however, was the impression that the Opera was a lucrative and flourishing concern, or at least might be easily made such, that there were not wanting those who wished to take the concern off my hands ; and one of the offers thus made led to my abandoning, for a season, my connection with the Theatre.

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It was in the month of May, in the season now past, that Mr. Benelli had proposed to take from me the existing lease of the Theatre, with a renewed lease for the two next years, which was made to me; to take upon himself the engagements and responsibilities of the season from its commencement; and to purchase the whole of my interest in the concern, including scenery, wardrobe, properties, and whatever else I possessed in the Theatre. The price of this purchase was settled at ten thousand pounds.

Mr. Benelli had, for many years, been actively engaged in theatrical concerns, and the business of theatrical agency, in transacting the negotiations between managers and performers. His familiarity with the continental theatres, and his acquaintance with the persons with whom he had to deal, and the situation in which he stood with regard to them, gave him an extensive insight into their private politics, which, when bargaining

on his own account, could not fail to be CH. VII.
1823. highly advantageous to him. The consciousness of this was probably an argument of great avail in inducing him to undertake the management; and, no doubt, had due weight with those by whom he was patronized. These were, the Marquis of Hertford, Earl of Glengall, the Hon. Henry de Roos, and Colonel Cooke, who also formed Benelli's Committee.

The agreement between us was, that, though the season, having so far proceeded, was to be concluded under my management, yet that Benelli should take upon himself all the engagements, and be entitled to the receipts from the beginning of the season, indemnifying me from all responsibility. The members of his Committee gave security for the payment of the rent, and Messrs. Yallop and Chippendale, Mr. Benelli's solicitors, also gave a bond for the performance of the covenants in the lease.

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Had the terms on Benelli's part been fulfilled, I should not have afterwards regretted the arrangement; as it was, I expected their performance, and was not sorry to have escaped from a concern, which not only had proved one of loss, but of great anxiety, and weighed heavily on my spirits. The money I was to receive from Benelli would go some way towards repaying my losses during the two previous years; and I felt a relief at being once again free from the knotty intricacies of the concern in which I had been entangled.

The ten thousand pounds were duly paid, and was the only part of the agreement which Benelli performed, as I shall subsequently have occasion to mention.

For my additional security against the debts, it was stipulated, that Mr. Allan, the Secretary to the Theatre under my management, should receive the proceeds of the house, for the purpose of paying off the

tradesmen's bills, performers' engagements, CH. VII.
and other demands to which I was liable 1823.
during the season, and which Benelli had
taken upon himself.

At the conclusion of this season, Madame Camporese took her final farewell. Respected and regarded as she had been, she could not leave, without regret, a country where her talents had been equally appreciated and encouraged. Other performers, it is true, may have received more enthusiastic applause in public, as claimed by their superior physical powers; but in private society, none ever received the flattering distinction bestowed on Camporese.

Her kind and affectionate disposition was very sensitive to these marks of friendly interest, and her love for the country where they had been shewed her, was manifested in her anxiety to take with her memorials of England. She took away the Worcester china, the glass, and all the articles of English

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produce or manufacture, which she had used during her residence here. Few things are more grateful to dwell on than these little touches of feeling, which shew the unclouded purity of the heart, beneath all those artificial coverings, with which business and the cares of life invest the character.

After taking a grateful leave of those to whose kindness she felt so much indebted, Camporese returned to Italy, and along with her husband, took up her residence at Rome, (where they yet continue,) under their proper name of Giustiniani.

Some of her English friends have visited her since her restoration to Italy, and speak with an uniform voice of her desire to please and oblige. I have, in a foregoing part of this work, mentioned the attention paid to her by the Marquis and Marchioness of Bristol; and when the sister of the Marchioness visited Camporese at Rome, the latter sent many little remembrances to those in Eng-

land whom she looked upon with gratitude. CH. VII.
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The engagements of this season had been—

	FOR THE OPERA.	£.
Borgondio,	- - -	400
Camporese,	- - -	1920
Caradori,	- - -	400
Clerini,	- - -	150
Curioni,	- - -	900
De Begnis, Mad.	- - -	1400
De Begnis, Mon.	- - -	500
Di Giovanni,	- - -	180
Graziani,	- - -	150
Garcia,	- - -	260
Placci,	- - -	600
Porto,	- - -	800
Reina,	- - -	650
Vestris,	- - -	700

	FOR THE BALLET.	£.
Anatole, Mad.	- - -	825
Anatole, Mons.	- - -	140
Armande,	- - -	250
Aimée,	- - -	240
Aumer,	- - -	675
Aurelié,	- - -	450

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	£
Bertrand, - - -	55
Boisgerard, - - -	250
Coulon, - - -	1350
Falcoz, Mad. - - -	300
Falcoz, Mon. - - -	300
Faucher, - - -	105
Gosselin, - - -	160
Jolie, - - -	160
Mercandotti, - - -	200*
De Varennes, - - -	700
Vestris, M. Chas. - - -	900
Vestris, Me. Ronzi, - - -	900

Though I consider the Opera department of this season as filled in an efficient manner, the Ballet was not perhaps quite equal to that of the two preceding years. But this, if it were the case, was certainly not owing to any want of exertions on my part to obtain the best *sujets*. Mlle. Mercandotti's retirement from the stage was a circumstance against which I could not, of course, take any precautions; and the jealousy at this time of the

* It must be remembered that this lady's services were only rendered to the Theatre during the early part of this season.

administration of Paris, prevented any great accession of talent being furnished to the King's Theatre, beyond the strict letter of their agreement. And though dancers of merit were procured from other places, yet the extreme attention bestowed at Paris on the perfecting of the destined performers in the Ballet, renders a competition with the scholars of the Académie quite a hopeless trial to the essayers of other countries; the best proof of which is, that, in the great Theatres in Italy, great pecuniary sacrifices are made, to bring a *premier sujet* or two from the *Grand Opera* in Paris. This of course creates a certain jealousy in Italy among the dancers; for the Ballet, as in Paris, is kept up at a great expense by the Government. Madame Ronzi Vestris is one of the best of the Italian school, though she can hardly be looked upon as quite of the style of her country, being married to a French dancer, and having had the advantage of

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CH. VII. lessons in the great schools of Paris, when
1823. passing through that capital on her way to
England. Her uncle, the famous Vestris,
still lives, and is, as may be supposed, one of
the first masters in the world; he is one of
those who have a government class.

CHAPTER VIII.

Opera opened for the season of 1824, under Mr. Benelli.—‘Zelmira.’—Rossini—Anecdotes of him—of Madame Colbran Rossini—‘Ugo, Rè d’Italia.’—‘Il Barbiere di Seviglia.’—Garcia.—Catalani’s re-appearance.—‘Il Nuovo Fanatico per la Musica.’—Signor and Madame Pasta.—Her musical studies.—‘Otello.’—Ronzi de Begnis.—‘Il Turco in Italia.’—‘Il Don Giovanni.’—Biagioli.—‘Romeo e Giulietta.’—‘Semiramide.’—Conclusion of the season.—Its Ballets.—Engagements.

THE season of 1824, under Mr. Benelli’s CH. VIII.
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management, opened on the 24th January, —
with the Opera of ‘Zelmira.’

Among other preparations for the commencement, the house had been newly decorated, and exhibited the appearance which, with little alteration, it yet retains.

The Opera was Rossini’s, and that composer, along with his wife Madame Colbran Rossini, having been engaged for the season, the composer himself took his seat at the

CH. VIII. ^{1824.} piano-forte, during the three first nights of its performance.

The reputation acquired by Rossini gave a powerful attraction to his name, and his appearance in the orchestra was loudly welcomed. His personal appearance hardly equalled the expectations formed on the current reports of his advantages in this respect*. He had been a more hand-

* Rossini is reported to have said, that the form of his person was the best in the world, and numberless anecdotes are in circulation of his influence among his countrywomen. The following is, I believe, less familiar than most of the others :—

At Naples, sitting in his chamber singing an aria in his 'Elisabetta,' which was on the eve of being brought out there, a billet was brought him by apparently the ugliest Mercury that ever carried note, and who instantly withdrew. The note contained an invitation of the most tender nature, and the place of assignation was a romantic spot, a little way from the city. He went, gave the required signal, and immediately heard sung his aria. When it was concluded, a lady, beautiful as day, made her appearance from a grove surrounding a small villa, to which she introduced him. They were mutually pleased with each other's discourse, and on parting, it was agreed that the next time of meeting should be signified by the Mercury as before. Rossini, full of surprise at having heard his aria sung, came, after much pondering, to the conclusion, that the ugly messenger must be the lady herself in disguise, and when the envoy next

some man than on his arrival here, though CH. VIII
1824. there was still enough to call for the epithet : he appeared stout and well built, with little expression in his features, and that little not indicative of the character of his musical genius, being rather of a serious than lively cast.

The excellence of Rossini as a composer was universally acknowledged both here and on the Continent. A gentleman whom I once met told me the following anecdote. During his residence in Milan, where he lived many years ago, he became acquainted with one Petini, a young man of nineteen years ; of no fortune or connexions, but of

came, his observations confirmed his suspicions. When the messenger retired, Rossini followed, and, unobserved, as he thought, traced her to a dwelling at a little distance from the city, well known as the residence of a Sicilian nobleman and his beautiful wife. Satisfied with his discovery, Rossini returned. Soon afterwards, on a renewed appointment, he went again, but had hardly arrived at the spot, when the report of a carbine, and a ball whistling past his ear, gave him a notice to retreat, a suggestion which he obeyed too rapidly, to observe whether or not he was pursued.

CH.VIII. 1824. considerable genius in painting, and more in

music, in which his imagination and enthusiasm promised that he would be a master. He had heard little modern music, and none of Rossini's, to whose style, however, his own nearly approximated. On Rossini's 'La Pietra del Paragone' being brought out at the Scala, my informant accompanied Petini to witness it. He said nothing during the representation, and on coming away continued silent and melancholy. Two days afterwards, his friend found him hard at work at his easel, without any traces of music about him. "Ah!" said he, "you see me! I have abandoned music—there can be only one composer in that style, and *he* (meaning Rossini) was born a year before me!"

All the attention was paid to Rossini on his arrival here, that could be considered due to the first composer of the day. He was invited to the Royal Palace, where he

was most graciously received by His Majesty, CH. VIII.
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whose taste and knowledge of music could not be unknown to Rossini. On his entering His Majesty's magnificent music-room, at Brighton, in compliment to him, the King had ordered the overture to 'Il Barbiere' to be played. His Majesty desired the composer to say what he would like to be next played. Rossini, with a good breeding natural to him, replied, that if he might take the liberty of selecting the next piece, it must be 'God save the King.'

He was a perpetual guest at the most fashionable houses. Nor was the politeness thus displayed towards him his only gratification. His talents as a singer, and performer on the piano-forte, were constantly called into action wherever he went, and seldom without a handsome acknowledgment of the estimation in which they were held. He had a fine tenor voice, and sang with much taste.

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An overcrowded audience testified the interest felt by the public, in the arrival of the *gran maestro*, on the opening night. The applauses of the house supplied the place of the overture, of which ‘Zelmira,’ among others of Rossini’s operas, is devoid, and, on the conclusion of the piece, Rossini was called for.

Madame Colbran Rossini performed the part of ‘Zelmira.’ She had for many years been one of the most celebrated performers on the Continent. By birth she was a Spaniard, and had almost become an Italian by adoption. She was herself a composer, and well versed in her science. Early in life she had acquired considerable reputation; a voice of a most charming quality and compass had united with superior personal endowments, to give *éclat* to her performances.

Madame Colbran was a wonderful favourite with the King of Naples; she then performed at the San Carlos, under an en-

gagement with Barbaja. Her name was a CH. VIII. 1824. party word, and the royalists shewed their attachment to the monarch, by applauding the singer. A gentleman from this country went to the Theatre with a friend, a Neapolitan. On coming away, the Englishman asked his friend whether he liked Madame Colbran: “Like her! I am a royalist,” was the reply.

When the revolutionists succeeded, they vented all their spleen against Colbran. Her appearance was the signal of uproar. A vehement member of the party laboured a whole evening in shewing his disapprobation, exclaiming at every pause, which the violence of his exertions compelled him to make, “It is our turn now—it is our turn now—now we can hiss!” The constitutionalists were suppressed, and Colbran regained her station.

The figure of Colbran Rossini was stately and commanding, fit for the representative of queens and heroines. In such characters her

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powers chiefly appeared, but in the pathetic she was deficient: much of her power she retained on her visit here; but it was said, by those who had before been familiar with her singing, that lapse of years (for she was now forty) had perceptibly influenced the tone and scale of her voice. There was something in the tone of this lady's voice of more powerful effect than I remember to have heard in any other, and her taste was perfect. It was when enamoured of Madame Colbran that Rossini composed many of his best operas, the first soprano part of each being written for her.

Madame Rossini met with great applause in the part of Zelmira; but, it was afterwards thought that, had her husband got up 'Ricciardo et Zoraide,' for her *début*, she would have made a still deeper impression. Her performance of Zoraide was, indeed, of memorable excellence; but, no doubt, the anxiety to commence the season with a

novelty was a paramount motive with the management. CH. VIII.
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‘Zelmira’ was much admired by musical amateurs, but failed to make an equal impression on the public at large. As a dramatic performance it did not excite much interest, and those who did not relish or understand the science of the music, and the skill displayed in its combinations, found the piece languid and heavy. It is, however, estimated as one of Rossini’s most correct and classical compositions. Indeed, the composer took uncommon pains with it, dreading the severity of German criticism; for though the opera was first brought out at Naples, it was written during the time of Rossini’s engagement at Vienna, and with a view to representation there.

It formed one of the conditions of Rossini’s engagement at the King’s Theatre, that he should compose for it a new opera. This opera (‘*Ugo, Rè d’Italia*’) was commenced

CH. VIII. and *nearly* finished, but never completed.

1824. It is now, I know not why, in the hands of Messrs. Ransom, the bankers.

The revival of ‘*Il Barbiere di Seviglia*,’ which was the next performance of the season, was not so successful as *Zelmira* had been. Ronzi de Begnis was unwell, and her part, *Rosina*, was undertaken by Madame Vestris, and performed by her with a happy success in the histrionic part, which her singing did not quite attain, the part being above the compass of her voice. A new debutant appeared; Signor Benetti, who, with no pretensions to any talent, undertook the part of Figaro.

Garcia, who had been wonderfully liked in *Zelmira*, was still more so in this opera, in which he took the part of the Count. His singing was excellent, and his acting better, only because it was less embellished.

Ten years had elapsed since, under an engagement with Mr. Waters, Catalani had appeared on the stage of the King’s Theatre.

She now appeared again with perhaps additional correctness in execution, and a voice which has never been heard without astonishment.

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She had no regular engagement for the season, but performed for a number of nights. On the first of these (February 28th) she appeared as Aristeia, in 'Il Nuovo Fanatico per la Musica'—'Nuovo' only in some injudicious modifications of Mayer's music, and the introduction of some extraneous matter, which was certainly *an addition*.

This character had been one in which Catalani's wonderful powers had formerly been displayed with most effect. Many of the frequenters of the Opera remembered it in full freshness, as it had impressed them when Catalani was in the full meridian of power and reputation. It was matter of surprise that so long an interval had produced no greater change in the singer. It could not be said that her voice had declined, but it

CH. VIII. was arrived at that point where effort was
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perceptibly needed to accomplish the effects which before seemed to be spontaneously generated.

The vibrating body of tone, the torrent of voice, that seemed beyond the power of space to diminish, still thrilled and astonished the ear. The success of the first night was prodigious; but the 'Fanatico,' in his present guise, was found so repelling, that repetition of this opera, again and again, diminished the audiences most perceptibly, though some new air was, on each performance, introduced to display the power of the Catalani.

In this opera, the sweet and soothing voice of Caradori was an agreeable relief to the bewildering force of the great wonder. Caradori had recently married Mr. Allan, of whom frequent mention has been made in the course of these pages. Her friends have the satisfaction of knowing, that few theatrical marriages have more conduced to the happiness and satisfaction of the parties.

The repetitions of 'Il Fanatico' ceasing to CH. VIII.
1824.
attract, Catalani appeared no longer at the King's Theatre; and 'Il Barbiere' again succeeded, and was, in its turn, replaced by 'Ricciardo e Zoraide.'

Zoraide was Signora Colbran's finest part, and she sustained it with equal power and ease. As a vocal performance, it was a pure and pleasing exhibition, and her acting of the part, though devoid of the impassioned and enthusiastic feeling of Camporese, was graceful and interesting.

The part of Ernesto was filled or occupied by Franceschi, one of the novelties of the season, whom I suppose no one remembers.

The next performance, 'Otello,' requires more particular mention, as in it Pasta made an appearance, which may be called a débüt, so little did her present reception resemble that of her earlier years.

The progress of Madame Pasta affords a prominent instance of the effects of study

CH. VIII. and sedulous cultivation. On her first ap-
1824.
pearance at the King's Theatre, in 1817*, in company with Fodor and Camporese, little was thought of her talents, and, if not condemned, she was neglected, and suffered to depart at the end of the season without having experienced encouragement. On most performers this negative failure would have operated to extinguish the latent flame of genius and capability. Pasta withdrew, and retiring to Italy, devoted herself unremittingly to the study of her science, and the improvement of her voice. Her genius is undoubtedly *real*, for she must have felt it; nothing but the full consciousness of what she might become could have strengthened

* Mr. Ayrton met with Signor and Madame Pasta in 1816, at the house of M. Paer, in Paris, and engaged them both for the ensuing season, at a salary of four hundred pounds for the two!—Signor Pasta, who possesses a tenor voice, never publicly appeared here; the success of the celebrated Crivelli, who was likewise brought to England by the same gentleman, for that season, left no opening for the débüt of any other tenor in 1817; and Signor Pasta has since abandoned all thoughts of the stage.

her to the endurance of the cold disregard CH. VIII.
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with which her commencement had been encountered.

Whilst in Italy, an English nobleman, who saw her there, said, that her exertions were unremitting; "Other singers," were his words, "find themselves endowed with a voice, and leave every thing else to chance; this woman leaves nothing to chance, and her success is therefore certain."

After a lapse of four years thus employed she suddenly re-appeared. Paris was the scene of this her second commencement, and the Parisians at once felt and acknowledged her worth; though it was perhaps hardly to have been expected that her severe and in-artificial representation would have found favour in the eyes of a people so devoted to an arbitrary style of acting and expression.

Nothing, indeed, can be more free from trick or affectation than Pasta's performance. There is no perceptible effort to *resemble* the

CH.VIII. character she plays; on the contrary, she
1824. enters the stage the character itself; trans-
posed into the situation, excited by the hopes
and the fears, breathing the life and the
spirit of the being she represents.

The character of her voice is, as to compass, a *mezzo soprano*. Its present excellence is in great measure owing to cultivation, its natural tone being far from perfect. On this account she is more peculiarly calculated to excel on the stage than in concert or private singing, where the splendour of her acting cannot be employed to agitate the soul. When on the stage, a far inferior voice, combined with the same powers of action, of gesture, and of look, would ever be effective.

The performance selected for her appearance was 'Otello.' Pasta, of course, performed the part of Desdemona; and inferior as the author of the drama has made that character to the Desdemona of our associ-



MADAME PASTA.
As DESDEMONA in the Opera of OTHELLO.

ations, the manner in which she sustained it CH. VIII.
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gave it a weight and effect that enchained
the attention and obtained the admiration of
those who were least partial to the opera.

Her reputation was, on this occasion, established, and she stood a reigning favourite on the stage which she had left without exciting a regret. The general audience was captivated by the vigour and truth of her representation, and the musical judges found great cause of commendation in her science, and the chastened judgment, the exercise of which prevented too much being done, and left her triumph to be accomplished without the aid of artifice or misplaced execution.

Otello was sustained by Garcia, a powerful representative of the part, and worthy of the society in which he was placed.

Ronzi de Begnis made her first appearance for the season in a character which she had made her own, that of Fiorilla, in 'Il Turco

CH. VIII. in Italia,' which commenced the performances
1824. in May. One of the best performers of the season made his débüt at the same time Signor Remorini, a *basso cantante* of very considerable power, and, as an actor, of respectable abilities. He was the Selim of the piece, and was much liked.

Immediately afterwards, 'Il Don Giovanni' was performed for the benefit of Madame Caradori, the name by which she still continued to be most generally known. The unaffected beauty of her singing and acting had unintermittingly been raising this lady in public favour, and few were so universally liked: her benefits were productive accordingly. There was also considerable novelty in the performance, since, familiar as this opera was, it appeared this season with almost an entirely new cast of characters. Garcia performed Don Giovanni, but failed to produce the effect that had accompanied

Ambrogetti's performance of that part, CH. VIII. 1824. though infinitely superior to that performer in voice and musical science.

A débüt was made on this occasion by Madame Biagioli, but she did not succeed in the Theatre, though, as a private singer, she was admired. I shall have occasion again to advert to this lady.

Pasta next appeared in 'Tancredi.' The favourite airs of the part are as familiar as her style of singing them, which, with perhaps less display, had greater power than that of her predecessors.

'Ugo, Rè d'Italia,' the opera on which Rossini was engaged, had been at this time repeatedly announced for speedy performance, and with as repeated disappointments. At the end of May it was said to be only half written; Rossini had quarrelled with the management, and had accepted the situation of composer to the Académie Royale—

CH. VIII, an engagement which was to commence in
1824. a month or two. It began to be doubted whether 'Ugo' would ever be finished, and the event justified these doubts.

For some time no new opera was performed; the previous performances of the season being repeated. Catalani, though she had performed only about half a dozen nights, had a benefit, and appeared as *Susannah*, in 'Le Nozze di Figaro.' 'Il Don Giovanni' was represented for the benefit of Madame Vestris.

The first succeeding novelty was 'Romeo e Giulietta,' by Zingarelli, brought out for the benefit of Pasta. The drama is, of course, a version of our 'Romeo and Juliet,' but so lame a one, that the names only remind us of its source. The ratcatcher, Tibalt, is turned into a lover of Juliet, and similar deviations from the original pervade the piece.

The part of Giulietta belonged to Ronzi CH.VIII.
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de Begnis ; from some cause, however, it was performed for two nights by Biagioli.

The music of 'Romeo e Giulietta' did not rise above mediocrity, with the exception of some occasional passages, and the fine airs in the part of Romeo. Pasta's acting and singing in the last act was so fine, that the opera could not fail of a certain success.

The last opera brought out this season was Rossini's 'Semiramide,' which yet continues popular. As a drama, it excels the ordinary mass of operas. The materials are of great interest, and fraught with high tragic power. The history, the time, the country, all afford the widest scope for the exercise of a bold and vigorous imagination. Much might be done on such a subject ; Rossini did not do all it admitted of, but the opera abounds with marks of genius. There are, as usual, many borrowings from his former productions, and the choruses and concerted

CH.VIII. pieces, excellent as they are, are too para-
1824.
— mount.

Pasta's representation of Semiramis is sufficiently well known as a performance of majestic and impressive dignity.

The list of the performers in the Ballet for the season presented several names of eminence, among which were those of Ronzi Vestris, Le Gros, Idalise, Grener, and Noblet. Le Gros had been dancing at Naples, where she was a great favourite ; how, indeed, was it possible that a handsome woman and a good dancer could be otherwise ? She had also been première danseuse at the Académie of Paris. Her dancing was modelled after the Italian school, and gave great satisfaction. Julie Aumer, the daughter of the Ballet-master, was also engaged, and a favourite.

Notwithstanding the excellence of the arrangements for the Ballet, I think its performances failed this year in producing so great an effect as formerly. Several new bal-

lets and divertissements were brought out : CH. VIII.
1824.
 ‘Honneur aux Dames,’ ‘L’Adoration du
 Soleil,’ ‘Le Songe d’Ossian,’ ‘Le Page Incon-
 stant,’ ‘Jadis et Aujourd’hui,’ and ‘La Fête
 Hongroise.’

The operas of the season had been :

Zelmira - - - *Rossini.*

Il Barbiere di Seviglia - - *Rossini.*

Il Nuovo Fanatico per la Musica - *Mayer.*

Ricciardo e Zoraide - - - *Rossini.*

Otello - - - *Rossini.*

Il Turco in Italia - - - *Rossini.*

La Donna del Lago - - *Rossini.*

Il Don Giovanni - - - *Mozart.*

Tancredi - - - *Rossini.*

Le Nozze di Figaro - - - *Mozart.*

Romeo e Giulietta - - - *Zingarelli.*

Semiramide - - - *Rossini.*

Though the audiences this season had been immense, and the receipts swelled by the total suspension of the free list, and the general refusal of orders, the loss to Benelli was such, that he left the country greatly in debt, as I shall afterwards more particularly show, to his performers.

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Nor had the performances benefited by the number of superfluous engagements entered into. Rossini broke his contract, and, I believe, paid the penalty stipulated for at the time of his entering into it. His wife had scarcely appeared, when she was removed to make way for Catalani, by whom the house gained nothing. M. Valabreque, whose idea of the needful in an opera establishment is "Ma femme et quatre poupées," must have been scandalised at the waste of talent exhibited. Pasta succeeded, and there were Ronzi de Begnis and Caradori: yet, either from accident or other causes, this sounding list fell short in the results of the usual company. Thus, with a new management, new performers, and new attractions in every department, the enterprise of this year experienced the fate of all preceding ones*.

How I was involved in its misfortunes, I shall mention in the next chapter.

* The Opera not being under my management this season,

I cannot vouch for the correctness of the following statement **CH.VIII.**
of engagements. I extract it from a periodical work :— 1824.

FOR THE OPERA.

	£.
Biagioli - - - -	200
Benetti - - - -	500
Caradori - - - -	500
Curioni - - - -	800
De Begnis (M.) - - - -	800
De Begnis (Madame Ronzi) - - - -	1400
Franceschi - - - -	200
Garcia - - - -	1000
Graziani - - - -	200
Pasta - - - -	1400
Placci, for a few nights, - - - -	200
Porto - - - -	700
Remorini - - - -	700
Rosichi - - - -	250
Rossini (Me. Colbran) - - - -	1500
Vestris - - - -	600

FOR THE BALLET.

Aumer, M. - - - -	1000
Aumer, Mlle. - - - -	600
Albert - - - -	1000
Boisgerard - - - -	300
Ferdinand - - - -	700
Guillet - - - -	400
Idalise - - - -	600
Le Blond - - - -	600

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	£.
Le Gros - - - -	1200
Noblet - - - -	800
Venafra - - - -	300
Vestris, M. - - - -	900
Vestris, M. Ronzi - - - -	1000

CHAPTER IX.

Transactions with Mr. Benelli.—Chancery suit.—Mr. Benelli withdraws from England at the close of the season, 1824.—Engagements left unpaid by him.—Incumbrances on the Theatre.—Treaty for taking back the Theatre.—Mr. Chambers's Insolvency.—Disputes with Benelli's assignees.—Preparations for opening the season of 1825.—Building declared unsafe, and performances suspended by order of the Lord Chamberlain.—Opera removed to the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, during the repairing of the Opera House.—Mr. Taylor, his facetiæ on the occasion—His death.—The terms of the Property-boxes expire.

IN order to exhibit the difficulties in which CH. IX.
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I now became involved, in consequence of
Mr. Benelli's defection, it will be necessary to
take a brief retrospect.

I have already stated the nature of the agreement, under which I parted with my interest in the Theatre to Mr. Benelli; that he was to pay me ten thousand pounds, and take upon himself the entire concern, as from the commencement of the season 1823,

CH. IX. though the management remained in my
1824-5. hands until the end of that season.

The season had, however, scarcely elapsed, when he repented of his arrangement; I know not from what cause, as every information had been given him as to the actual state of the concern. Notwithstanding this, he alleged, in order to open a way of withdrawing from his engagements, that he had been induced to make the agreement by misrepresentations on my part. On this pretended ground was a Chancery-suit commenced, and a new flood of litigation opened upon the unfortunate Opera, already overwhelmed by the disputes between Waters and Chambers.

At the same time, and without any pretext, Mr. Allan was removed from his office of receiver of the income of the Theatre, though, by the terms of the agreement, it was to be held by him as an additional security for me. An application to the Court on my part, in consequence, prayed the Chancellor to re-

instate Mr. Allan in his situation, and to CH. IX.
1824-5.
enforce Benelli to perform his agreement; a
cross-bill on the part of Mr. Benelli sought
to rescind the agreement, and recover from
me what I had already received on account
of it. The object of my proceedings, of
course, was to indemnify myself against any
responsibility on account of the ensuing sea-
son for 1824, for which, previous to the com-
pletion of the agreement with Benelli, I
had entered into engagements with several
performers. The application on my part was
granted by the Chancellor, thus acknowledg-
ing the justice of my claim—unfortunately
the season of 1824 was over before the pro-
ceedings were brought to issue, and I was
furnished with the means of protection when
the injury was done.

At the conclusion of the season of 1824,
Mr. Benelli left the Theatre and the
country. In his anxiety to possess some
memorial of the place, he endeavoured to get

CH. IX. 1824-5. as much money from the concern as possible,
and actually advertised for sale all the scenery, wardrobe, and properties of the House. I immediately applied to the Chancellor for an injunction, which being granted, the sale was stopped.

On Benelli's disappearance, besides large sums due to the performers, whom he had himself engaged, there were due on engagements, for which I was responsible, and against which I was to have been indemnified by Benelli, sums amounting to nearly five thousand six hundred pounds.

Besides this, there were left unpaid, on account of the last half-year's rent, five thousand pounds; and Benelli had mortgaged his interest in the concern, to Mr. Yallop for fifteen thousand pounds.

As I was liable to the performers whom I had engaged, and also, in the first instance, for the rent unpaid, the lease having been made to me, it became necessary, as loss was

inevitable, to consider by what means I CH. IX.
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could escape with the least injury; and I
could devise no plan apparently more
eligible, than that of taking back the Thea-
tre, and endeavouring, by cautious and dili-
gent management, to gain something towards
the losses of the year.

I therefore entered into a negotiation with
Mr. Yallop, who was, as I have mentioned,
himself interested as mortgagee. The sum
which Benelli owed to Mr. Yallop was far
beyond the value of the interest which he
(Benelli) had in the Theatre, which consisted
only of the scenery and moveables, and
the lease for 1825. This gentleman there-
fore agreed to give up the Theatre, and exo-
nerate it from his claim for the fifteen thou-
sand pounds, on my paying him five thousand
five hundred pounds, which was done, and
the arrangement completed in January 1825.

Mr. Chambers, on my applying to him, and

CH. IX. stating my intentions with respect to the
1824-5. Theatre, agreed to take my note for the rent due, though my note for the third of the former years' rent, which I have already mentioned, still remained unpaid.

Almost immediately afterwards Mr. Chambers became insolvent, and the amount of my two notes was claimed at the very moment when I was making the greatest efforts to regain the ground lost, and when I was paying off the claims of the performers, and the money to Mr. Yallop for his mortgage. In addition to which, I was engaged in making arrangements for the opening of the season, the time for which had already arrived.

Let the reader for a moment contemplate the situation in which I was now placed. Difficult as the progress of a manager at all times must be, surely such a complication of distresses never before overwhelmed one man

in the same situation. I have, fortunately, a mental and physical temperament which does not allow me to be easily cast down, but at this time I almost quailed.

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For the rent, however, I could resort to the noblemen and gentlemen who had become sureties for Benelli, and an arrangement was made by them, according to the terms of which I received from them, on account of the rent due, three thousand three hundred pounds. The remainder, and the whole of my own note, I paid, and was then in hopes that I could enter on the business of the season without further difficulty.

But as Benelli had formerly petitioned to throw back the theatre upon me, I had no sooner taken it back than his assignees (for he had been declared a bankrupt) commenced an action to recover it from me. Here was another and unexpected obstacle in my path. The technical foundation of their alleged

CH. IX. claim was involved in obscurity; and fore-
1824-5.

seeing more loss in retarding the opening of the season than in meeting their demands, a compromise was effected, and I paid them fifteen hundred pounds, and was released from their claims. But the sums I have stated were a part only of my losses. The law expenses attendant on the different circumstances to which I have adverted, amounted to several thousand pounds, which I had to pay.

Now, at least, I thought, after the settlement with the assignees of Benelli, I am safe, and may proceed with the business of the Theatre. I did so; and expedited as much as possible the engagement of performers for the ensuing season. This, as far as the advanced state of the year, and the adverse circumstances in which I was involved, would permit, was accomplished, and the 12th of February announced for the opening performance, 'Il Don Gio-

vanni' being given out as the opera of the evening.

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On the morning of this day, a communication from the Chamberlain's office prohibited any performances in the King's Theatre until the building had been surveyed by architects, and reported to be safe. At the same time I received a note from Mr. Hobhouse, of the Home Office, requesting my attendance there, the Home Secretary having received information from the Chamberlain's office that the building of the King's Theatre was unsafe, and that the Board of Works had instructed Messrs. Smirke and Soane to survey the edifice, and to make a report as to its state.

This seemed, in the Hibernian phrase, putting an end to the season before it was begun. But I found a resource against this unexpected evil. The little theatre in the Haymarket had been then recently erected as a summer theatre only, and being unemployed

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during the early part of the Opera season, I made an agreement with Mr. Morris, the proprietor, for the use of it until the alterations which should be required at the King's Theatre should be completed.

These alterations consisted in taking entirely down and rebuilding the north wall of the House, and making some repairs in the south wall, the east and west walls exhibiting no indications of weakness. No other alterations of any importance were considered necessary.

To show the exertions made in effecting the requisite alterations, it will only be necessary to mention, that the whole were completed in less than two months from the issuing of the order for closing the House.

Considerable alterations were requisite in the interior of the little Theatre to render it fit for the purposes of the Opera, such as the new adaptation of the boxes, and similar changes; but these were speedily completed,

and the first performance in the new habitation took place on the 5th of March.

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The expenses of the alterations at the King's Theatre cost between four and five thousand pounds. The rent of the other theatre during the time occupied in the repairs was two hundred and ninety-four pounds; the full rent of the King's Theatre continuing to be paid as usual.

The news of my difficulties, especially this last, afforded a great source of merriment to one individual, of whom I have made frequent mention, the quondam manager, Mr. Taylor; not, I believe, from anything like a malicious or uncharitable feeling, but from a sort of instinctive enjoyment, which he never failed to derive from the misfortunes of all connected with the concern which had proved so decided a source of embarrassment to himself. "Ah, ah," he would say, to any mutual acquaintance, "so Ebers is done up at

CH. IX. last,—thought what he'd do;—they have
1824-5. pulled his house about his ears now to some purpose.” These harmless triumphs were some of the last he enjoyed, as he died in the course of this year.

With my knowledge of Mr. Taylor, I could not feel any soreness at these exuberances; but, had they been pointed with ill-nature, I had plenty of approbation bestowed on my exertions at this time to compensate for them. To be sure, this approbation was not evinced in the most substantial manner, as the pit was generally empty during the performances at the Little Theatre. I was satisfied, however, as the period of our banishment was not long; and, in the mean time, the subscribers were not deprived of their boxes.

After the return to the other House, the audiences were not such as to afford great satisfaction to the manager, as the report of

the government-surveyors of the perfect security of the building failed to satisfy many, who consequently displayed their prudence in abstaining from what they considered so dangerous an indulgence.

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In this year (1825) and the preceding one, the terms existing in the property-boxes expired. A claim was made to these boxes by Mr. Waters, on the ground of some purchase made by him in 1813 from the Sheriff, in whose custody the House was, under an execution against Taylor. Of the particular nature of this claim I know nothing further, as it was never proceeded on.

CHAPTER X.

Performers engaged for the Season 1825.—Performances—
 ‘L’Adelina.’—‘L’Italiana in Algieri.’—Return to the King’s
 Theatre.—Castelli.—Treaty with Madame Pasta.—‘Cosi fan
 tutte.’—‘Nina.’—Madlle. Garcia.—Engagement of Velluti—
 Account of him—‘Il Crociato in Egitto,’ performed for his
 Benefit—Anecdotes of him.—Conclusion of the Season.—En-
 gagements and Expenses.

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THE many adverse circumstances adverted to
 in the last Chapter, and the consequent de-
 lay in commencing the season, with the un-
 certainty attached to the proceedings at every
 step, obviously threw great obstacles in the
 way of forming novel engagements in the
 early part of the year. Agreements were, as
 soon as possible, completed with the greatest
 favourites already before the public, but the
 prospectus of the season contained no new
 name. Ronzi de Begnis, Vestris, Caradori,
 in the female department of the opera, and
 Garcia, Curioni, Begrez, Remorini, (the last of
 whom had been introduced under Benelli’s

management,) Porto, Crevelli, Di Giovanni, and De Begnis, the men, completed the establishment of singers with which we had to commence the season. Charles and Ronzi Vestris, Coulon, Le Gros, M. Le Blond, and Julie Aumer, were the principal dancers.

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To ensure the best possible exertion of our limited means, the direction was again confided to the tried hands of Mr. Ayrton.

Besides the alterations made in the audience part of the Little Theatre, it was found necessary to effect many adaptations behind the curtain, to go on with the opera performances. These being arranged, the season opened on the 5th of May, with the old favourite, 'Le Nozze di Figaro.' The cast of the parts being pretty near the same as on former occasions, affords no room for observation. With this opera was given the ballet of 'L'Offrande aux Graces.'

'Le Nozze di Figaro' was succeeded by 'Il Barbieri,' in which Remorini performed the part of Figaro with good comic humour.

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New misfortunes, though of a minor character, made themselves felt in the indisposition of Ronzi de Begnis at this period, and in a succession of colds and calamities with which it pleased fate to afflict Signor Garcia. These were, however, though awkwardly, got over by change of performances.

The first new opera of the season was 'L'Adelina' of Generali, a composer from whom Rossini was said to have taken some general resemblances. The story of 'L'Adelina' is the same, or nearly so, as that of the favourite opera 'Clari.' The music, which, without being strikingly excellent, was uniformly pleasing throughout, was not quite unknown in this country, many airs selected from this opera having been for some time familiar here. Adelina, the counterpart of Clari, was performed by Madame de Begnis with great effect, produced as well by the excellence of her singing, as her simple and pathetic delineation of the character.

Carlotta, the second female part, was taken by Madame Caradori, which I mention only as an instance of her constant willingness to aid the interests of the theatre, for the part was one which, as inferior to her line of performances, she might well have refused, and her not doing so afforded a striking contrast with the conduct of other performers engaged this season.

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Rossini's 'L'Italiana in Algieri' had been performed here before the commencement of my management, and was now revived in a compressed form. It is not, in incident, much more than a conversion of the 'Turco in Italia;' nor did the music of this early production of the composer, present any thing very novel to those who had become familiar with his subsequent performances.

On the 12th of April, the alterations at the King's Theatre being completed, the Opera returned to its accustomed habitation, having, as indicated by the state of the treasury,

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gained nothing by its temporary absence. Indeed, during its time of distress, it met with less support than at any preceding period, and the audience that filled the larger space of the King's Theatre, seemed, by some strange process, to find "ample room and verge" more than enough in the smaller house. The latter was certainly less calculated to give effect to the performances; its construction was not such as to give continuance to the sounds of the music. The smallness of the stage was equally detrimental to the ballets, as a piece of any compass could scarcely be performed, and the dancers almost ran over each other for want of space. A new ballet, 'La Coquette Soumise,' was, notwithstanding, brought out during our residence at this theatre, and met with some degree of success. A new engagement was also effected, that of Madame Castelli, as seconda donna, at a salary of two hundred and fifty pounds.

‘Pietro l’Eremita’ was now revived, after being withheld for a season. It was received with undiminished, or rather with increased favour. Noraddin was excellently performed by Remorini, for whom the part had been composed; and Madame de Begnis’s Agia was one of her finest performances. Curioni also re-appeared, it being his first appearance in the season; and, in the present state of the company, his accession to the Theatre was invaluable, both as a tenor of the first order, and a performer always willing to oblige, and to advance the interests of the concern. He performed Orosmane; Caradori, Fatima; and Porto, Pietro.

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Considerable exertions had, meanwhile, been made to secure Pasta, who, in the height of favour, was performing at Paris. The slack part of the Parisian season commencing about this period, a general *congé* had been granted her until the beginning of June. Difficulties, however, presented

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themselves in the way of completing any engagement, which, at first, appeared insurmountable. Mr. Benelli, on leaving England, had left a considerable part of her salary for the season unpaid; and this, not unnaturally, rendered her unwilling hastily to renew her connection with the same Theatre. She required, that, in addition to the remuneration which might be agreed on for the employment of her services during the period of her *congé*, she should be paid the whole portion of her last year's salary, left owing by the late Manager. This was a difficult condition, as Madame Pasta's engagement for the preceding season was not one of those in which I had been concerned, and had been effected solely by Benelli. Correspondence proving useless to overcome this obstacle, Mr. Allan was commissioned to go to Paris, and endeavour to effect an arrangement, no time being to be lost. After much negotiation, the object of his

mission was accomplished, the conditions of the agreement being that Madame Pasta should receive a thousand pounds for her performances during the period of her *congé*, comprising not quite a month, her first appearance being on the 10th of May, and her last on the 5th of June. Double the sum mentioned, in addition to the payment of her claim on Benelli, was offered for her continuance here during the remainder of the season; but the terms of her French engagement precluded her acceptance of this proposal, and no efforts could induce the administration of Paris to consent to an extension of her *congé*. Her arrival here was both welcome and essential, as the indisposition of Madame de Begnis was no little difficulty in the conduct of business.

On the 10th of May, then, Madame Pasta made her appearance at the King's Theatre, in *Desdemona*. In this, as in all its other principal parts, the opera was cast as in the

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preceding season. She had an instantaneous effect on the receipts of the house, and the thinly-covered benches of the pit teemed with animation on her arrival.

Otello was succeeded by Mozart's 'Cosi fan tutte,' which, though not strictly a novelty, approached to one, not having been performed in this country for many years. It was given for Caradori's benefit. The music of this opera is excellent; the drama as absurd as can possibly be imagined.

In casting the parts for the rehearsal of this opera, that of Guglielmo was allotted to Signor Garcia, and that of Ferrando to Curioni. Garcia refused to perform the part given to him, as not falling within his department, though fully suitable to his abilities; and Curioni refused to allow it to be transferred to him, as not being adapted to his voice*. In consequence, it was found

* The want of subordination manifested in this affair induced me, at the time, to lay before the public the correspondence

necessary to give the part of Guglielmo to Remorini.

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which took place on the subject between Mr. Ayrton, Signor Garcia, and myself. It is republished here as illustrative of the text:—

King's Theatre, April 5th, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR,

Last night, at the moment when a rehearsal of 'Cosi fan tutte' ought to have commenced, I received a letter from Signor Curioni, announcing to me his determination not to accept the part of Guglielmo in that opera.

I by no means mention this refusal in terms of complaint; on the contrary, I am bound in candour to acknowledge, that the music assigned to the character which Signor Curioni rejects, is too low for his voice, and that in declining it he has the plea of justification. My object in thus communicating with you is, to put you in possession of a few facts, and to refresh your memory concerning some others, in order that you also may be enabled to justify yourself to the public, in case any delay should take place in producing new works, or in reviving operas that have not lately been performed.

When, on the 11th of last February, I became once more Director of the King's Theatre, I found the opera of 'Don Giovanni' already announced for the opening of the house on the following Saturday. You had then engaged Mrs. Gattie, but her illness made it necessary to postpone the commencement of the season in order to supply her place.

After encountering some difficulties, I was fortunate enough to conclude an arrangement with Madame Castelli, by which she agreed to accept the less important parts that might be allotted to her, provided she were first allowed to make her débüt as Elvira in 'Don Giovanni,' or as Despina in 'Cosi fan

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A similar obstacle occasioned some delay in getting up 'Semiramide,' the next opera

tutte.' Much as I wished to avoid giving the former opera early in the season, I nevertheless directed the rehearsals of it to be renewed, that Madame Castelli might make her appearance, and then be employed in other characters: when a bar was suddenly opposed to all our proceedings, by the reported danger of the house, and the repairs consequent thereon. The Haymarket Theatre was immediately engaged, *pro tempore*; but, at the moment that the preparations for opening it were completed, Signor Garcia was attacked by a cough, and rendered useless. Another opera was speedily got up, during the second representation of which, Madame de Begnis declared herself incapable of singing the airs, and the public had to regret the loss of her services for upwards of a fortnight.

Thus deprived of the prima donna and the prima tenore, I was driven for refuge to that charming, though hacknied work, the 'Barbiere di Siviglia;' but shortly afterwards, by dint of forced rehearsals, and resolute perseverance, was enabled to bring out 'L'Adelina,' and also 'L'Italiana in Algieri,' reduced for the occasion to one act.

I now looked forward to the leisure week preceding Easter, as a period in which much might be done towards opening the King's Theatre with éclat. I was, however, destined to experience another mortifying disappointment, for Signor and Madame de Begnis demanded the performance of a condition in their engagement, by which they were released from the necessity of attending any rehearsals during the Passion Week; a privilege which, after the injury you had sustained by the illness of the latter, it was reasonably hoped they would waive. Not the smallest advance, therefore, could be made; for Madame Vestris had set out for Paris where her mother was lying dan-

performed. 'Semiramide' was succeeded by Paesiello's 'Nina,' got up for Pasta's benefit. CH. X.
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gerously ill, and M. Begrez was confined to his couch by a serious accident, from which he is not yet recovered.

Yesterday morning I had the first rehearsal of 'Cosi fan tutte,' an opera that has not been performed for many years, and allotted the two characters, Ferrando and Guglielmo, to Signors Curioni and Garcia. To my surprise, the latter refused that which was assigned to him, claiming the other; and when, *pro forma*, I requested Signor Curioni to attempt the rejected part, he declined it, as I have stated above, finding it as much too low for his voice, as that of Ferrando is, I fear, too high for Signor Garcia's.

The ground on which the latter refuses to take the part given to him is, that it is written in the base clef. When first this admirable opera was produced in London, in 1811, Signor Tramezzani, a tenor, and one of the finest singers and actors that ever graced the lyric stage, took the character of Guglielmo. Signor Crivelli also, another tenor of the highest class, accepted the same in 1817; and M. Begrez, with a much higher voice than either of the former, has likewise performed it. *Except in one instance, the part has never been sung at the King's Theatre but by a tenor*, and, with the few alterations that have always been made in it, is well suited to Signor Garcia, whose compass is extending downwards, and will not permit him to sing with due effect the part of Ferrando which he chooses.

But how can Signor Garcia justify his refusal to take the character given to him, after he has so repeatedly sung, both in Paris and London, in that of Don Giovanni, which is quite as low as the other, and is also written in the base clef?—What he

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‘Nina,’ or ‘La Pazza per l’Amore,’ was a revival, but much abridged, from the days of

denominates a base part (which is, in fact, a barytone), is in his compass when it suits his own purpose ; but is out of his voice when the interests of the Theatre alone are concerned.

In short, Signor Garcia, like other singers who have long been in this country, seems now to consider the theatre as a matter of secondary importance. A salary of twelve hundred and fifty pounds for a season of forty nights only, out of which he, most likely, will not be required to sing above five and twenty times, should have prompted him to devote zealously all his talents in aid of the establishment ; ought to have induced him even to make sacrifices, if necessary, in order to manifest his gratitude to the subscribers who contribute so very liberally towards the support of a Theatre which grants him such generous terms.

Thus you will perceive that I am, for the moment, crippled : I have not the means of bringing out ‘Cosi fan tutte,’ without much loss of time ; and, until the effects of M. Begrez’s accident cease, ‘Don Giovanni’ cannot be performed ; unless, therefore, he shortly recover, Madame Castelli’s débût must be deferred, and I shall be consequently incapable of producing any opera on the 12th in which there is a subordinate soprano part, except such as have already been brought before the public this season.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your very faithful Servant,

W. AYRTON.

JOHN EBERS, Esq., *King’s Theatre.*

After the foregoing letter was received, Signor Garcia wrote to say, that he would take the part of Guglielmo, provided he was allowed to withdraw from ‘La Semiramide,’ the opera in

what is now become the old school, that is to say, the Opera of forty years back. At the

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which Madame Pasta was to appear immediately on her arrival in London.

To this proposal I sent the following reply:—

M. EBERS est charmé d'apprendre que Signor Garcia n'a plus d'objection à accepter le rôle de Guglielmo dans *Così fan tutte*, qui a toujours été rempli en Angleterre par un Tenor, par Signors Tramezzani, Crivelli, et M. Begrez, quoique composé dans la même clef que celui de Don Giovanni, rôle que Signor Garcia a si souvent chanté. M. Ayrton fera faire une répétition de cet opera demain à midi, à laquelle Signor Garcia sera régulièrement appelé.

M. Ebers ne peut donner aucune réponse positive à Signor Garcia relativement à Semiramide; M. Ayrton est le Directeur du Théâtre, et M. Ebers lui a délégué ses pouvoirs. S'il est possible de monter Semiramide sans Signor Garcia, M. Ebers est certain que M. Ayrton se fera un plaisir de le dispenser de son rôle; mais M. Ayrton dans sa décision doit être guidé par ce qui est dû aux Abonnés et au Public.

27, Old Bond Street, ce Jeudi 7 Avril, 1825.

This was answered by the following note:—

M. Garcia voit bien par la réponse de M. Ebers, qu'il n'a pas bien compris, ou qu'il ne veut pas comprendre, la proposition qu'il lui a fait de jouer le rôle de Guglielmo dans *Così fan tutte*, pourvu qu'il ne joue pas celui qu'il a joué dans Semiramide. M. Garcia ne prendra pas nullement celui de Guglielmo que quand il aura par écrit l'ordre de ne pas jouer celui dans Semiramide. Si M. Garcia a joué le rôle de Don Giovanni, malgré qu'il est écrit pour une basse-taille, c'est pour un acte de complaisance pour

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1825.

time of its production, it was immensely successful, but its last performance at the King's Theatre dwelt only in the memories of the old frequenters of the Opera, associated with other singers and other audiences. Yet

faire du bien à l'entreprise ; puisque lui étant engagé pour chanter *le premier tenor*, il n'est pas obligé de chanter les basses-tailles.

Londres, ce 7 Avril, 1825. A 5 heures du soir.

To the above the subjoined reply was sent :—

M. EBERS a reçu le Billet très impoli de Signor Garcia. La seule remarque qu'il ait à faire est, que M. Ayrton, quoique bien disposé à dispenser Signor Garcia de son rôle dans *Semiramide*, ne sauroit, en s'acquittant de son devoir, se lier par aucune promesse positive à ce sujet, attendu que par là le débût de Madame Pasta auroit pu éprouver un retard après son arrivée à Londres. Signor Garcia a déjà, en chantant imprudemment dans un concert particulier, privé le Théâtre de ses talens trois soirées sur les huit qui ont été données, et il a en outre intentionnellement négligé son devoir : il auroit donc dû être une des dernières personnes à entraver la Direction.

Signor Garcia ayant accepté conditionnellement le rôle de *Guglielmo*, il est évident maintenant qu'il *peut* le chanter, mais qu'il ne veut pas y consentir sans exiger une condition qui pourrait nuire au théâtre si on la lui accordait. Mais M. Ebers mettra les Abonnés et le Public immédiatement en état de juger de la conduite de Signor Garcia.

Old Bond Street, ce Vendredi, 3 Avril, 1825.

greatly as the unadorned beauty of this Opera differed from the newer and decorated style, the revival of Nina was received with general satisfaction.

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The part of Nina, as performed by Pasta, was a masterpiece of operatic performance; in the opinion of some it was her most perfect character. It gave great scope for the exercise of her power of representing strong and energetic emotion, and the manner in which she filled it, showed its excellence by its effect on the audience.

The other Operas in which Pasta appeared during her stay, were 'Tancredi,' 'Romeo e Giulietta,' 'Don Giovanni,' and 'Il Barbiere.'

Mademoiselle Garcia, a young lady, the daughter of the tenor Garcia, and who had been engaged for the remainder of the season, at a salary of five hundred pounds, made her débüt at this period. Her first character was Rosina, in 'Il Barbiere,' and was

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filled with a degree of talent and of stage tact, rarely witnessed in so young a débutante, for her age did not exceed seventeen. Her voice was a contralto, and managed with great taste.

The departure of Pasta was followed by a languor truly alarming to the manager, who now seemed bereft of his last resource; for the voice of Mad. De Begnis was evidently in a hopeless state, so far as that season was concerned; and Signor Garcia's was in such a condition, that it could not be depended on for a single day. At this crisis, Signor Velluti arrived in London. Mr. Ayrton had previously heard much of an opera, 'Il Crociato in Egitto,' which had been received with enthusiasm at Venice, and at Florence. Having obtained a sight of the score, he determined if possible to bring it out; and the arrival of Velluti, for whom it was written, and who had performed the principal character in both the above cities, enabled him to

carry his design into execution *. This celebrated singer was engaged for the residue of the season, at a salary of six hundred pounds, and the curiosity excited by the announcement of a *Musico* was vivid in the extreme.

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Thirty years had elapsed since a singer of this class had appeared at the King's Theatre. Very few were known to exist at the time, three of these, Mariano, Ferri, and Doboli, all of whom were resident at Rome, showed by their age the rarity of artists of the same description, none of them being less than fifty years old. A fourth, Reali, was much younger, his age being about twenty years. All these individuals were in actual practice, as singers, though less in the departments of the stage than at cathedrals, and other

* Signor Velluti, however, much wished to make his débüt in Morlacchi's opera, 'Teobaldo e Isolina,' from a persuasion that it was better calculated for this country, and endeavoured to bring over the director to his opinion: but Mr. Ayrton's experience of the taste of this town led him to a very different conclusion, and the success of Meyerbeer's masterly and original work fully justified his decision.

CH. X. places for the exercise of sacred music.
1825.

Another *musico*, Lorati, sang at Lisbon four or five years ago.

Velluti had commenced his career at the theatres about twenty years previously to his arrival in England, and had first appeared at Rome. At this city he soon grew into favour, and after performing under engagements at different places there, he accepted an engagement at Naples. After remaining at Naples some years, he went to Milan. Here he became acquainted with Rossini, and it was said that the manner in which he sang a cavatina in 'Aureliano in Palmyra,' operated in determining the composer's style. According to the report, Velluti added so many judicious ornaments to this cavatina, which was written with more simplicity than Rossini's subsequent compositions, that the latter, fearful that other singers, with less taste, might attempt similar liberties, resolved to fasten down the performer to the ideas of

the composer, by expressing his music in so detailed a manner, as to leave no room for the introduction of graces by the singer. This anecdote is given on good authority, but seems hardly consistent with the dislike which Velluti is understood to entertain for the compositions of the Rossinian school.

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At Milan, Velluti was the idol of the people ; he was received *con furore*, and his fame spread on every side. A Milanese gentleman, who had a rich uncle, who was ill, met his friend in the street : “ Where are you going ? ” “ To the Scala, to be sure.” “ How ! your uncle is at the point of death.” “ Yes—but Velluti sings to-night.”

At Vienna, the place of his next engagement, he was crowned, medallized, and recorded in immortal verse. From Vienna, his next remove was to Venice, where, I believe, he afterwards sang with Catalani. Velluti sang, at Verona, the cantata, ‘ *Il vero Omaggio*,’ with wonderful success :

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everybody applauded, except an old Austrian officer, who thought nothing good out of Germany. “But is not this good?” they said to him; “Yes, it is good, but I know a man at Vienna that would sing it as loud again!” After going the tour of the principal Italian and German theatres, Velluti arrived at Paris, where the musical taste was not prepared for him. Rossini being at this time engaged at Paris, under his agreement to direct there, Velluti did not enter into his plans, and having made no engagement there, he came over to England, without any invitation, but strongly recommended by Lord Burghersh, and other people of distinction abroad. He brought letters to many persons of rank here, by all of whom he was noticed in the most handsome and flattering manner, and received most decided support from them on his *debût*.

The composer of ‘*Il Crociato in Egitto*,’ an amateur, was a native of Berlin, where his

father, a Jew, who is since dead, was a banker of great riches. The father's name was Beer, Meyer being merely a Jewish prefix, which the son thought fit to incorporate with his surname. He was the companion of Weber in his musical studies. He had produced other operas, which had been well received, but none of them was followed by, or merited the success that attended 'Il Crociato.'

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Considerable preparations were made, and no little expense incurred, to bring forward this opera, which at Paris took nine months to get up. It was here accomplished in one. As Velluti had gone through all the labour of rehearsing, &c., at two theatres, and was, therefore, well acquainted with the composer's intentions, Mr. Ayrton left the getting up of the music almost wholly in his hands, and he exerted himself with the greatest zeal in producing it, in a manner worthy of the composer and of the country

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to which it was now to be first introduced. Mademoiselle Garcia, then a young singer, had a complete course of instructions from him on this occasion, to enable her to fill the part allotted to her, in a manner correspondent to his own. He also brought with him, from Florence, designs for the scenery, dresses, &c., not only of ‘*Il Crociato*,’ but also of ‘*Teobaldo e Isolina*,’ the Opera in which he very much wished to make his first public appearance here.

To give some support to the new singer against the opposition expected to be manifested on his *débüt*, the first performance was announced for his benefit, on the ground of his exertions as stage-manager; and to ensure him some remuneration, I bought his benefit from him for seven hundred pounds.

The friends of Velluti did not fail to attend his *débüt*. The Duke of Wellington, with a party who had dined at Apsley House,

attended the Opera, as did most of the people of distinction in town. The old amateurs came to compare the new singer with those of their early recollections; and those who were of more recent date than the days of Pacchierotti and his contemporaries, came to hear so rare a novelty. Some came to oppose him, and some out of a feeling that he had been harshly treated by the press, and by a portion of the public. Various motives conspired to draw together an overflowing house. But the event was left uninfluenced by any artificial means of securing applause*.

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Velluti's demeanour on entering the stage was at once graceful and dignified; he was in look and action the son of chivalry he represented. His appearance was received

* I mention this the rather, because a passage in a work of high and deserved reputation might be construed to imply otherwise. See page 160 of "Musical Reminiscences," where it is said "that unusual precautions were deemed necessary to secure a somewhat partial audience, and prevent his being driven from the stage on his very first entrance upon it, which seemed to be a predetermined measure."

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with mingled applause and disapprobation ; but the scanty symptoms of the latter were instantly overwhelmed. Every one of the many who were there must remember the effect produced on the audience by the first notes he uttered. There was something of a preternatural harshness about them, which jarred even more strongly on the imagination than on the ear. But, as he proceeded, the sweetness and flexibility of those of his tones which yet remained unimpaired by time, were fully perceived and felt.

The personal appearance of Velluti added much to the effect of his débt. He is tall and of a slender make, his countenance pale and suffused with a melancholy expression, which gives way, when the singer is excited, to one of vivid animation. Fraught by nature with excessive sensibility, his features speak every subtle shade of emotion by which the performer is supposed to be, and in Velluti's performances really is, actuated.

With these expressive powers, there reigns, throughout all he does, a chaste and simple style, both in singing and acting, undestroyed by needless ornaments and misplaced efforts at display. Maintaining a true command over his powers, he rarely, if ever, lets them get the better of his discretion.

From what has been said, it may be concluded that Velluti's countenance is an interesting one; it is, indeed, so much so, that a late artist said, "that, without a single feature which one should select as beautiful, Velluti had the finest face he had ever seen."

The effect of Velluti's assistance in getting up the opera was fully manifest in the perfection of all the singers in their respective parts. Remorini, Curioni, Mademoiselle Garcia, excelled themselves, and Caradori exhibited a degree of excellence which even those who had best appreciated her powers had not anticipated. Her duet with Velluti,

CH. X. 'Il tenero affetto,' is well remembered, and
1825. with delight.

It was at Velluti's suggestion that I sent for Crevelli, the tenor, who had sung here a few years before, to débüt in 'Teobaldo e Isolina.' Velluti entertained a high opinion of that delightful singer, Miss Paton; he thought he had never heard a finer voice, and undertook that a two years' residence in Italy would qualify her to rank as *prima soprana*.

The favourable reception of Velluti on his first night completely put an end to any effective opposition; and the uneasiness he had sustained in consequence of the attacks made upon him, and to which his susceptible temperament rendered him peculiarly open, was compensated by the numerous testimonies he received, of support and regard. He received many handsome presents, not a few of which came anonymously, or under evidently assumed names. These marks of

attention were encouraging to a man who had suffered no little from the exertions made to prevent his appearance. CH. X.
1825.

It is agreeable to be able to say that, high as Velluti now stood with the public, his professional excellence fell short of the goodness of his private character. As a man of kind and benevolent disposition, and equally gentlemanly feeling and deportment, he is known to many who duly appreciate and respect him.

His private habits are of the most simple and inoffensive kind. In society he never fails to interest; and the apparent melancholy of his disposition is exchanged for a lively and almost playful exuberance of good humour—a feature of character not unusual with persons of much sensibility. Velluti is sparing in the pleasures of the table; a cup of coffee and a little dry toast form his breakfast, and his other meals are in proportion. His chief amusement is in billiard-

CH. X. playing, or whist, which, though no gamester,
1825. he is very fond of.

All the performers of note have generally attached to them a greater or less number of individuals, chiefly their own countrymen, who manage their affairs, or otherwise make themselves useful to their principals. Velluti has been fortunate in the selection of Signor Giovanni Fradelloni, who fills the office of his secretary, and is every way worthy of the trust reposed in him by Velluti. This gentleman was formerly manager of one of the Italian theatres, and possesses ability and integrity.

No other opera than 'Il Crociato' was performed during the remainder of the season, which closed on the 13th of August, after ten successive representations of that piece. This period of the season was successful, though accompanied with a good deal of expense in bringing forward the 'Crociato.' Had the previous part of the

season been equally fortunate, it must have been a gainful one. But with the exception of the nights of Pasta's performance, it was far otherwise; and the heavy expense incurred, in consequence of the change of place from the Opera House to the Haymarket Theatre, still further diminished the receipts. The result was a loss of not less than six thousand one hundred and fifty pounds—the receipts being twenty-seven thousand two hundred and twenty-seven pounds twelve shillings and sixpence; the expenditure, thirty-three thousand three hundred and seventy-eight pounds four shillings and ninepence.

The operas of the season were as follows:

Le Nozze di Figaro - - - *Mozart.*

Il Barbiere - - - *Rossini.*

L'Adelina - - - *Generali.*

L'Italiana in Algieri - - - *Rossini.*

Pietro l'Eremita - - - *Rossini.*

Otello - - - *Rossini.*

Semiramide - - - *Rossini.*

Così fan tutte - - - *Mozart.*

Nina - - - *Paesiello.*

CH. X. 1825.	Tancredi	-	-	-	Rossini.
	Romeo e Giulietta	-	-	-	Zingarelli.
	Il Don Giovanni	-	-	-	Mozart.
	Il Crociato in Egitto	-	-	-	Meyerbeer.

In addition to ‘*La Coquette Soumise*,’ brought out at the Haymarket Theatre, two other ballets were produced this season, ‘*Clari*,’ which did not prove eminently successful, and ‘*Cléopâtre, Reine d’Egypte*.’ The latter was one of the most approved ballets brought out during my time: it brought, indeed, much more applause than profit, for the costume and decorations, with the frequent changes of dress (not less than four) required for its performance, made a sad inroad on the receipts. This ballet did great credit to Aumer, and also to Le Gros and Ronzi Vestris, who danced in it, as Cleopatra and Octavia, with much grace and expression.

Both Charles and Ronzi Vestris left the King’s Theatre this season, having an en-

gagement at Naples, and have not since returned. The ballet of 1825 was less perfect than it had previously been ; but circumstances had rendered this unavoidable, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that this fact was well known, and its influence taken into account by the frequenters of the Opera. CH. X.
1825.

I regret to say, that Placci, who had been engaged in all my previous seasons, was this year attacked by a melancholy complaint, which prevented his continuing his performances. His fellow-performers willingly seconded a proposition made, I believe, by De Begnis, of raising a fund for his support by a concert, which was accordingly given at the Argyll Rooms. He afterwards recovered, and was able to retake his situation on the stage.

The following were the engagements of the season *.

* Many of these were only proportionate parts of the original engagements, which were reduced in consequence of the delays in the commencement of the season.

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FOR THE OPERA.

£.

Begrez,	366
Caradori,	400
Castelli,	250
Crivelli,	133
Curioni,	700
De Begnis, M. and Mad.	1300
Di Giovanni,	120
Garcia, M.	1250
Garcia, Mlle.	500
Pasta,	1000
Porto,	533
Ravogati,	50
Remorini,	1100
Rubbi,	100
Velluti,	600
Vestris,	466

FOR THE BALLET.

£.

Aumer, Mlle.	333
Aumer, M.	466
Boisgerard,	166
Bertrand,	40
Le Blond,	333
Le Gros,	600
Vestris, M. Chas. and Mad.	1200

* * One night during this season I was informed by a watchman of the Theatre, that some suspicious-looking persons had been haunting the neighbourhood of the Theatre, and that he apprehended some mischief. I directed him to procure additional assistance, and if the individuals were again seen, we would apply to the police. They did not make another appearance, but a few nights afterwards an assistant brought me a note, which, he said, had been placed among some old properties under the stage, by a man whom he had observed stealing about there, with great care to avoid observation. I made no scruple of reading this billet, which, indeed, was not sealed. I read it as follows:—

“I think we had better postpone the affair—it would be dangerous; and, in the present state of things, suspicion must be kept asleep. Now the *combustion* is agreed on, a day or two will be well sacrificed to insure safety. What a blow up! How we shall startle the manager!”

This letter, coupled with what I had before heard, alarmed me no little; the words ‘combustion’ and ‘manager’ appeared sufficient to designate the object of the letter; and, as the danger was to be apprehended from within, I was much disturbed. I showed the letter to one or two friends, and such inquiries were made as were judged prudent. Next day, one of the gentlemen, to whom I had shown the note, came to me, and, after a violent fit of laughter, informed me that he had discovered the plot—that the word I had read ‘combustion’ was ‘conclusion,’ and that the whole letter related to an intended elopement of one of the gentlemen of the orchestra with a figurante, who was kept under strict surveillance by her nearest female relation, (*the manager*,) with whom she resided.

CHAPTER XI.

Renewal of the Lease of the Theatre.—Increased Rent.—M. Seguin at Paris.—Engagements—Velluti—Mlle. Bonini—Garcia in America—Pellegrini—Madame Schütz.—Proposition of Madame Catalani.—Theodore—Pauline—Brocard—Fleurot. Other engagements.—Marriage of Le Blond and Julie Aumer.—‘Il Crociato in Egitto.’—‘Teobaldo e Isolina—Velluti’s performance in the last Act.—Pasta—her Performances.—‘Medea.’—Mayer.—‘Aureliano in Palmira.’—Ballets—‘Le Bal Champêtre.’—‘La Naissance de Vénus.’—Results of the Season of 1826.—List of Engagements.

CH. XI.
1826.

THE lease of the theatre for two years, made at the end of the season 1823, having now expired, it was necessary to enter into negotiations with the managers of Mr. Chambers’s affairs, if I intended to continue the management of the theatre, and this the success of the latter part of the past season determined me to do, notwithstanding the losses sustained. My expectations of continued good houses must certainly have been sanguine to induce me to accept the theatre at the terms

insisted on by Mr. Chambers and the agents CH. XI.
of his creditors, the rent being increased 1826.
from ten to fifteen thousand pounds. However, I took it at this rent for the season of 1826. It was shortly after this that Mr. Chambers was declared bankrupt.

Having taken the house, I lost no time in reinforcing the company. A correspondence was commenced with various persons abroad, for the purpose of obtaining singers, and Mr. Seguin was commissioned to meet me at Paris, to make engagements with first-rate dancers and others.

With regard to the singers, I was not at first very successful. Those in Italy were principally engaged by Barbaja, as I was informed by the Count St. Antonio, who was at Milan, and interested himself in assisting my endeavours to enrich the opera department. The engagements for the Carnival tended to diminish the facility of making engagements, all the singers of note being

CH. XI.
1826.

occupied at some one or other of the numerous theatres, open at this period in Italy.

Velluti was, in the first place, engaged for the season, at the sum of two thousand three hundred pounds ; for this he was to discharge as well his duties as a singer, as those of director of the music, the latter of which appointments occasioned some disagreeable contention between him and M. Bochsa, who acted as director of the orchestra and choruses, and composer of music for the ballet, a situation distinct from that held by Velluti.

Although Caradori was this season engaged at a salary of seven hundred pounds, yet a wish to strengthen the company induced me to enter into an agreement, proposed by Velluti, with Mademoiselle Bonini, a singer who had gained considerable repute on the continent. She was a tolerable actress and singer, but her total want of personal attractions was a disadvantage which rendered her

decidedly a failure. In Italy, beauty is not CH. XI.
1826.
considered so essentially necessary as in —
England, and, provided a singer has talents, personal appearance is little considered. Her principal recommendation was, that she had been accustomed to sing with Velluti, whose tuition she had ; but this qualification was an indifferent equivalent for the seventeen hundred pounds of her salary. Although Madame Bonini failed here, she is never without engagements at the first theatres in Italy.

Madame Cornega was engaged as a contralto singer. We were compelled to make the best arrangements we could, Mademoiselle Garcia* having gone with her father to America, where operas were performing at New York. Cornega's agreement was for five hundred pounds for the season.

* This lady was greatly admired on the other side of the Atlantic. She has since married, and is now engaged as Madame Malibran Garcia at Paris, where she is quite the rage. It is said that she has concluded an engagement with Barbaja, to commence at the expiration of her Parisian one.

CH. XI. A great loss at this time was that of Re-
1826. morini, who had formed an engagement at Milan, before M. Seguin, who endeavoured to secure him, could meet with him at Paris. Pellegrini was, therefore, engaged for five hundred pounds.

Zuchelli would have been a strong addition, and proportionable efforts were made to obtain him ; but he was at Paris, and unable to procure a *congé* for more than two months, unless on the terms proposed by Rossini, the then director, who required that I should pay for a performer to supply Zuchelli's place at Paris ; and as Zuchelli's own engagement for *four* months would have been eight hundred pounds, this proposition was not acceded to.

Another object was to secure Madame Schütz, who asked first eight hundred and fifty pounds, and then to have half the amount given to Pasta, if the latter performer was engaged. Pending the treaty, she ac-

cepted an engagement at Paris, where her success was at first doubtful.

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1826.

The terms required by Madame Pasta at this period were such, as I thought injudicious to accept; in April, however, an engagement was made with her, as will be mentioned in its place.

Curioni, De Begnis, Porto, and Torri were re-engaged for the season.

An engagement was attempted to be effected with Catalani. The agreement proposed on her part is subjoined. With all my experience of such things, I regard it as unique. The following is a literal translation:—

“ Conditions between Mr. Ebers and M. P. de Valabreque.

“ 1. Every box and every admission shall be considered as belonging to the management. The free admissions shall be given with paper orders, and differently shaped from the paid tickets. Their number shall be limited. The manager, as well as Madame Catalani, shall each have a good box.

“ 2. Madame Catalani shall choose and direct the operas

CH. XI. in which she is to sing ; she shall likewise have the choice of
1826. the performers in them ; she will have no orders to receive from any one : she will find all her own dresses.

“ 3. Madame Catalani shall have two benefits, to be divided with the manager ; Madame Catalani's share shall be free ; she will fix her own days.

“ 4. Madame Catalani and her husband shall have a right to superintend the receipts.

“ 5. Every six weeks Madame Catalani shall receive the payment of her share of the receipts and of the subscription.

“ 6. Madame Catalani shall sing at no other place but the King's Theatre, during the season ; in the Concerts or Oratorios, where she may sing, she will be entitled to no other share but that specified as under.

“ 7. During the season, Madame Catalani shall be at liberty to go to Bath, Oxford, or Cambridge.

“ 8. Madame Catalani shall not sing oftener than her health will allow her. She promises to contribute to the utmost of her power to the good of the Theatre. On his side, Mr. Ebers engages to treat Madame Catalani with every possible care.

“ 9. This engagement and these conditions will be binding for this season, which will begin and end, and continue during all the seasons that the Theatre shall be under the management of Mr. Ebers, unless Madame Catalani's health, or the state of her voice, should not allow her to continue.

“ 10. Madame Catalani, in return for the conditions above mentioned, shall receive the half part of the amount

of all the receipts which shall be made in the course of the season, including the subscription to the boxes, the amount of those sold separately, the monies received at the doors of the Theatre, and of the Concert-room ; in short, the said half part of the general receipts of the Theatre for the season. CH. XI.
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“ 11. It is well understood that Madame Catalani's share shall be free from every kind of deduction, it being granted her in lieu of salary. It is likewise well understood, that every expense of the Theatre during the season shall be Mr. Ebers's, such as the rent of the Theatre, the performers' salaries, the trades-people's bills ; in short, every possible expense, and Madame Catalani shall be entirely exonerated from any one charge.

“ This engagement shall be translated into English, taking care that the conditions shall remain precisely as in the original, and shall be so worded as to stipulate that Madame Catalani, on receiving her share of the receipts of the Theatre, shall in no ways whatever be considered as partner of the manager of the establishment.

“ 12. The present engagement being made with the full approbation of both parties, Mr. Ebers and M. Valabreque pledge their word of honour to fulfil it in every one of its parts.”

I need not say that these conditions were not acceded to.

In the engagement of dancers we had

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better fortune. M. Seguin, assisted by M. D'Egville, left no means untried to accomplish the formation of a superior ballet. The latter gentleman was again engaged as ballet-master, at a salary of thirteen hundred pounds*.

The first engagements completed were those of Theodore and Pauline, at four hundred and fifty and four hundred pounds. Pauline proved a great favourite; her pretty little sylph-like figure, and light laughing eyes, were greatly admired.

Another engagement was that of Madlle. Fleurot, at seven hundred pounds, though she asked fifty more. She had considerable attractions, both in personal appearance, and in her capability as a dancer.

* I might have engaged M. Anatole, M. Honoré, or C. Vestris, as ballet-master, for less than two-thirds of this sum, and that amount would have been a first-rate price; but it was understood that M. D'Egville, who had an extensive connection through the means of his school, should have a benefit, the proceeds of which should be taken in part of the thirteen hundred pounds. It so happened, however, that this benefit could never be got to take place.

Mademoiselle Brocard was engaged this season. The beauty of this lady made an impression in her favour, which her talents confirmed. Her dancing was exquisitely graceful, her pantomime exceedingly good, her attitudes perfectly classical, her figure faultless. Her salary was eleven hundred and fifty pounds. CH. XI.
1826.

With the advantage of M. Seguin's assistance, I succeeded in engaging a number of artists for the ballet, of a character to give proper effect to a magnificent ballet which M. D'Egville proposed bringing out this season—I allude to the 'Naissance de Vénus.' Coulon, whose talent is deservedly appreciated here as in Paris, received thirteen hundred and fifty pounds; M. and Mad. Le Blond eight hundred. Mad. Le Blond was the Mademoiselle Aumer of the previous season. When in Paris, in the autumn of 1825, I had been invited to their marriage, but was unable to attend. Besides which,

CH. XI. 1826. we robbed the Academy of several useful dancers.

The last season had commenced later; the present opened on the 7th of January, with 'Il Crociato in Egitto,' which still maintained its popularity. The various departures and arrangements occasioned a considerable change in the cast of the parts; and as the opera is, from many circumstances, one of interest, it may not be amiss to exhibit the alterations.

	1825.	1826.
Aladino	Remorini.	Porto.
Osmino	Crivelli.	Denville.
Adriano de Montfort	Curioni.	Curioni.
Armando	Velluti.	Velluti.
Palmide	Caradori.	Bonini.
Alma	Castelli.	Castelli.
Felicia	Mlle. Garcia.	Cornega.

The opera thus performed, though well received, was certainly not equal to the representation of it in the previous season. The mechanical department of the piece was

improved, Velluti's exertions having been still unremitting in making the choruses and subordinate assistants perfect in their duties.

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A Ballet, of little importance, called 'Justine, ou la Cruche Cassée,' was at the same time produced. Its failure reflected no discredit on the Ballet-master, as the late arrival of most of the dancers in London, and the early opening of the house, rendered success difficult or impossible.

The 'Crociato' continued to be performed until the end of the month. It certainly gained ground in the public estimation; the more so, perhaps, as it was a grateful relief from the too overwhelming flood of Rossini's music, which, excellent as it is, had prevailed rather disproportionately. The change of its cast did not, however, please; for though Porto increased in favour, and Velluti was still attractive, Bonini and Cornega were far from filling the places of their predecessors. To introduce Madame Caradori

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again, 'La Donna del Lago' was revived, in which she made her first appearance for the season. She was joyfully received by the audience, although at the time indisposed; but her exertions overcame her illness, and rendered its existence imperceptible.

The next piece was a new one in this country, 'Teobaldo e Isolina,' a composition of Morlacchi, a pupil of Zingarelli, and distinguished for his productions in church-music. 'Teobaldo e Isolina' had been originally brought out at the Teatro la Fenice at Venice, where it was received almost with enthusiasm.

The plot of this opera is exceedingly complicated, which, if the plot of an opera was at all regarded, would be a strong objection to a piece composed in a foreign language, and, therefore, invested with a double obscurity. The story is of the class much in vogue with romance readers some years ago. Teobaldo, banished with his father and sister

by the machinations of an usurper of their family estate, becomes the lover of the usurper's niece and heiress, and a discovery being of course made, is tormented between his newly-formed attachment and his family feud, strengthened by the reproaches and exhortations of his father. He kills the lady's brother, and prays the lady, in return, to kill him, which she declines, and he and his father shortly after determine to kill themselves, but are prevented from carrying this sage resolution into effect by Isolina's father, who has suddenly laid by his hostile feelings at his daughter's entreaties, and rushes in just as the suicidal duet is about to be perpetrated. Teobaldo and Isolina are married, and all ends happily.

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The music is as intricate as the drama, displaying the difficulties rather than the beauties of the science. It is full of out-of-the-way passages and unusual combinations; yet this was the opera in which Velluti

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earnestly wished to have made his débût ; and, nothing but Mr. Ayrton's interference would have prevented him from so doing. Had he accomplished his intention, his débût would have been less brilliant than it was. The opera was not liked ; its want of success made me regret the expense bestowed in bringing out this piece, which was not trifling.

Yet, though this opera failed to win the favour of the public, there were parts of it almost unrivalled in effect. The moonlight scene in the last act is so excellent, not only in itself, but in the opportunities it afforded of theatrical display, that those who have witnessed it must yet retain a lively impression of its power and beauty.

In this scene, the prominent object is a castle illuminated by the rays of the moon ; before which Velluti, habited as Teobaldo, in a suit of steel armour, entered, the very personification of chivalry and romance.

Such had been the skill of the painter, that a pale gleaming light seemed to pervade every part of the stage; it might have been the steelly hue, reflected from the armour of the solitary knight, that clothed the walls of the castle in a kindred tint. The melancholy light that fell on the dim scene appeared only to deepen its sombre and unearthly aspect.

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While this scene is displayed, which seems to *paint* the silence of night even to the eye, the full orchestral accompaniment is hushed—the flute and the harp alone are heard to prelude the mournful air that breaks from the lips of the melancholy warrior. If ever the attention of an audience was enchained, enthralled, bound, as it were, by a spell, it was when Velluti sang the *Notte Tremenda*. The stillness of the scene was communicated to the house; and not a word was spoken, not a breath heard:—was this wonderful? when not to the eye and ear only, but to the

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heart and the soul, every thing conveyed but one impression; that of pathos, so deep so touching, so true, that it wanted but one added shade to become too deep for enjoyment.

Beautiful as the ‘Crociato’ is, powerful as Velluti has made its representation, perhaps nothing in it equals the tender beauty of the scene in ‘Teobaldo,’ which I have adverted to, but which to describe is impossible. It may be mentioned, that the part of Isolina was the one in which Bonini was most favourably received*.

* It was, I think, on the morning after one of the performances of this opera, that I received a specimen of an epistle from a gentleman, who, having presented himself for admission at the pit door, in a pair of drab pantaloons, was, in accordance with a well known and approved regulation, refused entrance as not being in dress. He was astonished, it seems, at this, “*For,*” says his letter, “I was dressed in a *superfine blue coat* WITH GOLD BUTTONS, a white waistcoat, fashionable tight drab pantaloons, white silk stockings, and dress shoes, ALL worn but once, a few days before, at a dress concert at the Crown and Anchor Tavern!” (The mark of admiration I beg to observe is the writer’s own.) He proceeds to express his indignation at the idea of the manager presuming to “enact sumptuary laws

From this short-lived novelty, a return CH. XI.
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was made to the old favourite, 'Il Barbieri,' in which Pellegrini made his débüt. His Figaro was the best representation of the character, as a piece of acting, that had been seen for a long time; his singing, also, was far above mediocrity. Pellegrini's comic talents gained him universal favour in London, and had done so before at Paris, where he had performed at the Théâtre Italien. His knowledge of music was good, and his voice possessed a fair strength.

without the intervention of the legislature," with threats of legal proceedings, and an appeal to a British jury. "I have mixed," he continues, "too much in genteel society, not to know that black breeches, or pantaloons, with black silk stockings, is a very prevailing full dress; and, why is it so? because it is convenient and œconomical, *for you can wear a pair of white silk stockings but once without washing,* AND A PAIR OF BLACK IS FREQUENTLY WORN FOR WEEKS WITHOUT ABLUTION." But the postscript is the cream: "P. S. I have no objection to submit an inspection of my dress of the evening in question to you or any competent person you may appoint."

Among other petty annoyances of management, is the receiving of numberless letters, as ridiculous, but not often as amusingly absurd as this,

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Caradori appeared too in this opera ; she performed the part of Rosina. In this character was made evident the great progress she had made in histrionic power. Formerly her warmest admirers had lamented a want of more vivacity and activity in her performance ; the archness and life with which her representation of Rosina was endued, satisfied all their wishes.

‘ Pietro l’Eremita,’ the next opera in succession, was the most successful performance yet offered this season. Pellegrini now performed Noraddin, which had been before taken by Zuchelli and Remorini. The new sultan gave great satisfaction ; but his acting of the part, which allowed no opportunity for the display of his line of talent, was not quite equal to that of his predecessors.

A greater peril of contrast with former excellence, was encountered in the character of Agia ; which, after having been successively the property of Camporese and Ronzi,

now devolved on Bonini, who had neither CH. XI.
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In the month of April, Pasta again appeared on the stage of the King's Theatre. The engagement required by her was two thousand three hundred pounds, for three months and a half, which was acceded to; but she "stood upon security," which was got over by making the money payable in three portions; the first, of five hundred pounds, to be paid in Paris; a second, of like amount, on her arrival in London; and the remaining one, of the rest of the money, to be paid previous to her appearance on the stage*. She was not compellable to appear in any but the following operas: 'Tancredi,' 'Romeo e Giulietta,' 'Semiramide,' 'Rosa Bianca e Rossa,' 'Nina,' and 'Medea,' and any new opera which might be expressly composed for the King's The-

* This engagement will be found in the Appendix.

CH. XI. 1826. atre. In addition to her salary, she was allowed, during the term of her engagement, a box, and twelve pit and twelve gallery tickets.

With the usual correctness of statements relative to Opera affairs, it was currently reported at the time, that Pasta's engagement was after the rate of between two and three hundred pounds a night. She was to play thirty nights : the nightly average of her receipts, therefore, was something more than seventy six-pounds.

At no period of Pasta's career has she been more the fashion than during this engagement. She had, literally, worked her way up to eminence ; and, having attained the height, she stood on it firm and secure : no performer has owed less to caprice or fashion ; her reputation has been earned, and, what is more, deserved.

She was now a little altered in appearance, her figure being more full than when she

had appeared the preceding season; but this detracted little or nothing from her scenic effect. Her voice was, perhaps, improved, as her incessant and studious cultivation of her powers naturally tended to an increase of excellence, not attained by those who trust solely to their natural endowments.

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Although 'Otello' was performed with scarcely any allowance for Pasta's recovering from the fatigues of her journey, (she had been involuntarily detained in her departure from Paris,) she went through her part with as much energy as if she had been at rest for weeks.

'Romeo e Giulietta' succeeded 'Otello,' in which Pasta was supported by Caradori, who did more towards infusing into the Giulietta of this meagre drama the soul and passion of our Juliet, than any singer had known in the same character. She took her benefit shortly afterwards, and appeared as Susanna, in 'Le Nozze di Figaro,'

CH. XI. ^{1826.} her original character of the Page being filled by Castelli, who pleased, but was far from equalling the Cherubino of Caradori.

‘La Cenerentola’ was now revived; the male parts were well supported by De Begnis, Pellegrini, and Torri, who had been re-engaged this season. Of the female characters nothing need be said, for Bonini’s was the best performance among them, and her Cinderella has little of the nature and expression requisite to make it very effective.

The performances of June commenced with ‘Medea in Corinto’ by Mayer, a Bavarian, none of whose operas, with the exception of this one, have, to my recollection, been given in England. His music is less of the school of his own country than of Italy, in which country he spent the more active part of his life. His excellence consists rather in elegant and pleasing expression, than in power over the deeply-seated passions.

‘Medea’ was a favourite with most of the CH. XI.
1826. lovers of the old school, because it consisted of that more simple and subdued music, which has of late years been almost superseded by compositions more elaborate in their structure, and abounding in passages of contrast and artificial ornament. The story of the opera, which followed with truth the classical history, afforded, it must be obvious, abundant scope for the exercise of talents like those of Pasta, to whom the delineation of overwhelming and consuming passion was natural. The hurry and distraction of a mind convulsed with emotions inconsistent as ungovernable, the thirst for vengeance, and the wild achievements of despair, were pourtrayed by this inimitable actress with a fidelity almost terrific.

In illustration of the power of Pasta’s performance of Medea, it may be mentioned that a professor of poetry was so struck with it, as to be impressed with a firm, though

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unaccountable, notion that Pasta must and did personally resemble the Medea she personated, an opinion which exposed him to a hoax, that sent him a journey of seventy miles, to see a visionary portrait of Medea, recovered from the ruins of Herculaneum!

Another novelty took the place of 'Medea,' though of inferior merit: this was Rossini's 'Aureliano in Palmira,' on which there existed great difference of opinion, some lauding it as the best of the composers' productions, and others equally depreciating it. On its representation abroad in 1814, when it was brought out, it proved, I believe, a decided failure. Having no overture, the leader of the orchestra prefixed to it the overture of Cherubini's 'Les deux Journées.' This opera was performed for the benefit of Velluti, who, in connection with it, became involved in legal turmoils of a singular nature, on the ground of a promise to pay the chorus-singers an additional remunera-

tion, beyond that of their regular engagement, on condition of their exerting themselves in the discharge of their duties ; a reward which, Velluti contended, was only, and according to his letter containing the promise, to be given to the male singers. The ladies went to law, and having brought Velluti into the Sheriff's Court, gained their cause, one of their number officiating as advocate on the occasion.

After repetitions of several of the previous pieces of the season, 'Zelmira' was revived, in which Pasta performed, though this opera was not comprized in the list stipulated for in her engagement. The character of Zelmira had, indeed, been enriched and amplified by the composer himself, to adapt it for the powers of Pasta, it having been originally composed for the more limited capabilities of Colbran Rossini.

The engagement of Pasta, for this season, terminated with the repeated performance

CH. XI. of 'Medea;' after which she departed for
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Naples, where she was engaged. Her absence made the performances seem insipid, for Bonini, it may be imagined, did not aid much in supplying her place; and the attractions of Velluti's talents were diminished by a severe illness, from which he was now but just recovering. 'Aureliano in Palmira' was again given.

No other opera was brought out this season. A word or two remain to be said about the Ballet.

After the Ballet of 'Justine, ou la Cruche Cassée,' which I have before mentioned, there were produced the following ones: namely, 'Le Temple de la Concorde,' 'Le Bal Champêtre,' 'Le Mariage Secret,' and 'La Naissance de Vénus.' The first three of these failed to attain much popularity, though 'Le Bal Champêtre' was a lively and amusing piece, and well adapted to display the talents of the best dancers.

The elder Coulon complained strongly that, in consequence of our having the 'Bal Champêtre' in London, M. D'Egville had prevented him from giving his yearly ball to the artists in Paris, having taken away all the pretty women thence. Every body liked this little divertissement, for nothing could be more charming than the dancing of the quadrilles by the most beautiful French *artistes*, vying with one another in the elegance of their dresses, which were all of the *dernière mode de Paris*, and after their own taste. In this divertissement danced Brocard, Fleurot, Pauline, Le Blond, Copère, Geneveux, Olivier, La Vasseur, Delâtre, Rosalie, and Mariette.

'La Naissance de Vénus' was of a superior order, and gave full play to Brocard's graceful attitudes and captivating beauty. This ballet was composed for, but not mounted at, the Académie Royale. Though in name confined to the birth, it comprises

CH. XI. the marriage, or, at least, the choice of a
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husband of the goddess, who, dazzled by a sceptre, the emblem of dominion, presented to her by Vulcan, selects the blacksmith god as her partner. Venus was represented by Brocard, and her urchin son by a child, whose perfect training and singular comprehension of its part attracted universal applause.

The expenditure of this season exceeded the receipts by a larger sum than that of the preceding season, the deficiency being seven thousand five hundred and thirty-seven pounds, fourteen shillings, and tenpence—the loss on the season.

Had the rent this season remained the same as in the previous one, my losses would not have amounted to three thousand pounds, being not more than half the amount of loss in the season 1825. But it so happened that, whatever exertions were at any time made to render the concern less ruinous

than it had been, were more than counter-
balanced by the sudden and immense increase
of the rent on every renewal of the lease.

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The operas of the season had been as follows :—

Il Crociato in Egitto	- - -	<i>Meyerbeer.</i>
La Donna del Lago	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Teobaldo e Isolina	- - -	<i>Morlacchi.</i>
Il Barbiere di Seviglia	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Pietro l' Eremita	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Otello	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Romeo e Giulietta	- - -	<i>Zingarelli.</i>
Tancredi	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Nina	- - -	<i>Paesiello.</i>
Medea	- - -	<i>Mayer.</i>
La Cenerentola	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Zelmira	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>
Aureliano in Palmira	- - -	<i>Rossini.</i>

On several occasions this season parts of more than one opera were given on the same night, and when 'Nina' was performed, it being compressed into one act, an act from 'Il Barbiere,' or some other standard piece, was in general given.

CH. XI. 1826. The engagements of the principal performers this season were as beneath :

FOR THE OPERA.

	£.
Bonini - - - - -	1700
Caradori - - - - -	700
Castelli - - - - -	300
Cornega - - - - -	500
Curioni - - - - -	1300
De' Angeli (M. and Mad.) - - - - -	60
De Begnis (Signor) - - - - -	800
Deville - - - - -	200
Destri - - - - -	300
Di Giovanni - - - - -	100
Pasta - - - - -	2300
Porto - - - - -	800
Pellegrini - - - - -	550
Rubbi - - - - -	275
Torri - - - - -	500
Velluti - - - - -	2300

FOR THE BALLET.

Boisgerard - - - - -	250
Brocard - - - - -	1150
Copère - - - - -	150
Coulon - - - - -	1350
Delâtre - - - - -	166
D'Egville - - - - -	1300

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Fleurot	-	-	-	-	£. 700
Geneveux	-	-	-	-	150
Le Blond (M. and Madame)	-	-	-	-	800
La Vasseur	-	-	-	-	150
Olivier	-	-	-	-	150
Pauline	-	-	-	-	400
Rosalie	-	-	-	-	166
Théodore	-	-	-	-	450
Mariette	-	-	-	-	80

CHAPTER XII.

Preparations for the season of 1827.—My journey to Paris.—Rossini—his proposal to join me with Barbaja in the King's Theatre.—Engagements made.—Signor Puzzi's journey to engage Performers in Italy.—Mad. Brizzi.—Difficulties occasioned by theatrical agents.—Mlle. Toso engaged.—Endeavours to engage Mlle. Sontag—her letters.—Miss Fanny Ayton—Account of her and her success abroad.—Engagement for the Ballet.—Opening of the season.—‘La Vestale.’—‘La Schiava in Bagdad.’—Galli.—Pasta.—Brambilla.—‘Maria Stuarda.’—‘Didone.’—Conclusion of the season—and of my Management.—Statement of result of the season, &c.—Proposal made for the Theatre.—Messrs. Laporte and Laurent become the Managers.—List of performances during the Seven years.

CH. XII. I NOW commenced the business of preparing
 1827. — for my next, and, as it proved, my last season ;
 and in the autumn of 1826, I went to Paris
 for the usual purpose of forming engagements.

Here I was in frequent intercourse with Rossini and Meyerbeer ; the former of whom continued to fill the situation of di-

rector, and took every opportunity of assisting and obliging me. Rossini was in great repute at Paris, and mixed a great deal in society, to which his social and happy temperament inclines him. He was living in a handsome style, had a villa about three miles from Paris, and spent his time in an agreeable union of the occupations of the director and the *bon vivant*. Our intimacy led to a proposition, which, however, was never carried into effect,—that he, Barbaja, and myself, should become partners in the management of the King's Theatre. Had this been effected, the direction of the music and the performances would have devolved upon Rossini, and the engagements would have been transacted by Barbaja, who, from his numerous theatrical concerns, was better calculated than any other man in Europe, to engage performers with advantage. The arrangements for the ballet, letting the boxes, and attending to the sub-

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CH. XII. scribes, would have been my department.
1827. Rossini appeared very anxious that this proposal should have been acted on, in which case, he, as Director of the Italian Opera at Paris, would have afforded additional assistance to that of London. A proposal was about the same time made to me, by Mr. Glossop, Barbaja's partner.

One of my objects in visiting Paris, was to engage Rossini to come to England for the ensuing season, and to bring out his 'Siège de Corinthe,' then in rehearsal at Paris, and which he had composed for the Académie Royale. The other chief engagements which I endeavoured to make, were with Zuchelli, and Galli, a bass of high reputation. My departure from Paris at a more early period than I had anticipated, prevented my concluding these engagements personally; they were taken up by Signor Puzzi, whom I dispatched to Paris for the purpose. The death of his mother prevented Rossini

from coming to England this season : he CH. XII.
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was greatly affected by her loss ; for, like most
of the natives of Italy and France, whom I
have met with, he was strongly attached to
those with whom he was closely connected
by blood. The two other engagements were
completed, Zuchelli's at eleven hundred and
thirty pounds, and Galli's at eight hundred
and seventy.

It was desirable, on many accounts, that
the performances should this season com-
mence early ; and I, therefore, lost no time in
engaging those performers of the previous
season, whose services were most essentially
requisite, such as Caradori, Curioni, De Be-
gnis, and Giovanola. At the strenuous re-
commendation of Meyerbeer, I engaged for
the commencement Madame Biagioli, who
had failed here in 1824. He insisted that
her voice and manner were good, and spoke
in high terms of her utility in being able and
willing to play secondary, as well as first-rate
parts.

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Of all people in the world, composers are, according to my experience, the worst advisers in making engagements with singers. I will not pretend to account for this—perhaps they are biassed in favour of a performer, whose capabilities may have been displayed in some of their own compositions, accidentally suited to the powers of the individual. It has been said too, that the influence of climate on the organization of an Italian is such, that a very good singer in Italy may prove quite worthless here, and instances have been adduced in support of this doctrine. The climate, however, need not surely affect the disposition of a singer; and that of Biagioli, on her arrival here, by no means answered the description of it given by the composer.

Signor Puzzi, having returned from Paris, with the engagements of Zuchelli and Galli, was immediately commissioned to undertake a journey of greater importance, and to search the Continent for such performers of

merit, as he could meet with disengaged. CH. XII.
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This step was in some measure taken at the recommendation of Rossini; the same composer justly characterized Signor Puzzi, as possessed of great intelligence in theatrical affairs, active and zealous.

Puzzi departed accordingly. On arriving at Paris, his first object was the engagement of Madame Brizzi, a contralto, reported, not only by Puzzi, but by Rossini and Meyerbeer, to possess first-rate powers and considerable science. Anxious, of course, to secure a performer from whom so much might be anticipated, I had no difficulty in sanctioning the arrangement made by Puzzi, which was, that she should receive seven hundred pounds for the season; but if, by the 14th of April, she was found not to succeed, she should receive four hundred pounds, and the engagement cease. The introduction of this stipulation proved eventually fortunate, for Brizzi's failure was such,

CH. XII. as to render her continuance at the Theatre
1827. } utterly useless.

After accomplishing this treaty, witnessing the débüt of Mlle. Blasis, and making some endeavours to obtain, as second-rate women, Madlles. Cadette, Vertelli, and others, which were frustrated by the impossibility of procuring congés, Puzzi proceeded to Lyons, on his route to Milan, to which city, as to other principal towns, he had letters of recommendation from Prince Esterhazy, and other personages of distinction. One of the principal attractions at Milan, was the Signora Garcia (not the daughter of the tenor Garcia), who was singing there, and in high favour with the Milanese. Count Strossoldo, the Governor of Milan, refused to let the Theatre part with this lady, unless replaced by one of equal talent, such as Signora Boccabodate, a soprano, then at Modena. The Signora was somewhat capricious, and, at Milan, occasionally refused to sing. Puzzi

was greatly impeded here and elsewhere, in CH. XII.
1827.
his negotiations, by the incessant intrigues of the theatrical correspondents on the Continent, a class of people whose occupation is to transact agency on affairs of the Theatres, and who, endeavouring to monopolize every thing, strive that all engagements shall be made through their medium. Puzzi described Madlle. Garcia, as being a beautiful woman, with a fine voice ; he made every effort to obtain her, but during his stay at Milan, nothing could be done. Had she been able to accept an engagement—one was sent over—it would have been made, though she required a thousand pounds for two months.

Madame Eckerlin, a good contralto, was at Milan. Puzzi offered her six hundred pounds for five months, but this was not accepted. Madame Eckerlin, a pupil of the Conservatorio, a contralto, and beautiful, and Passerini, a contralto, and not beautiful, were

CH. XII. also objects of inquiry. A proposal of three
1827. hundred pounds was made to Botticelli, a
basso cantante, but not accepted.

If Signor Puzzi had hitherto been disappointed in the accomplishment of many of his plans, he succeeded in one. From Turin he wrote to me to say that he had had the fortune to engage Mademoiselle Toso, "*belle comme une ange, jeune de dix-neuf ans, élève du Conservatoire de Milan.*" The animation of his expressions perhaps indicated the embryo flame which subsequently gave to Mademoiselle Toso the name of Puzzi. This lady he engaged at three hundred and fifty pounds, and the travelling-expenses of herself and her father and mother, who accompanied her. He also brought with him Mercadante's opera of 'Didone,' intending it for the débüt of Mademoiselle Toso; the composer himself having made some alterations in the opera to adapt it accordingly. The similarity of name, I be-

lieve, led some into the mistake of supposing the lady engaged to be Tosi, a highly celebrated singer. It was said, I do not know with what truth, that this latter singer had been engaged by Barbaja for no less than fourteen years. CH. XII.
1827.

If this be correct, it furnishes a striking illustration of the remarks previously made on the facilities enjoyed by the Continental managers in forming engagements, and of the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of a manager of the King's Theatre contending with them.

It was intended to secure Ferlotti, but she was now engaged to sing at Paris.

When Toso subsequently arrived in England, she was received with a warmth proportioned to the accounts which had preceded her, and was every where invited and admired. At a party given almost immediately after her arrival here by the Countess St. Antonio, Madlle. Toso's talents were exhi-

CH. XII. ^{1827.} bited to great advantage ; and a few night's

afterwards she performed in a full rehearsal at the house, which was attended by a large part of the fashionable world, attracted by the celebrity already acquired by the new performer. Some admired her beauty most ; some her singing ; and all her amiable manners and disposition. “ I wonder,” said some idle talker, “ how Toso came to be so tall ? ” “ I can tell you,” said a lady of rank ; “ her stature was given her as a standard to estimate her merits by.”

In addition to the engagements actually made for the current season, Puzzi made arrangements to secure for the following one (1828) several singers and dancers, such as Mademoiselles Amigo, Blasis, Ellena, and others.

An engagement which I was most anxious to make was that of Mademoiselle Sontag, whose talents have since been so highly and justly appreciated in this country. This



MAD^{LE} SONTAG.

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lady, at an age unusually early, had attained CH. XII.
a degree of reputation which the exertions of 1827.
a life have often failed to secure, though the
aspirant has been gifted with talent. The
beauty of Mademoiselle Sontag made a deep
impression, and opened the way to the fa-
vourable reception of her singing, and might
have ensured success had her vocal abilities
been far beneath the high standard by which
they are to be estimated. Sontag is a native
of Coblenz; she came out in public at
Frankfort, and even at five years old gave
presages of her future eminence. She stu-
died at the Conservatory of Prague, and
thence went to Vienna, where Fodor was
then engaged. Sontag esteemed her talents,
and studied her manner. She visited the
chief theatres of the continent with the same
unbounded admiration that has attended her
appearance here. In united sweetness and
flexibility Mademoiselle Sontag's voice is un-
rivalled. Wherever Sontag went, the esti-

CH. XII. ^{1827.} mation of her beauty and her talent was the same. The sentiment excited towards her in the earlier part of her career was that of astonishment, which was succeeded by unbounded admiration. A crowd of worshippers attended her footsteps, and many were the romantic tales in circulation about her. One of these has denoted her as the destined bride of a German prince ; another has bestowed her on an ambassador at the French Court. A report of more interest, though, perhaps, of no greater authenticity, was retailed to me ; its purport is as follows :—

A few years ago an attachment subsisted between the beautiful Henriette and a young student, of good family and excellent character. His application, his learning, and his abilities had gained him the highest estimation at Jena ; but his mistress valued him more because he had maintained an unsullied reputation, keeping free from the excesses in which other youths of the university too

frequently indulged. In an evil hour, under CH. XII.
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the excitement proceeding from having obtained some academic honour, the student was induced to indulge beyond his wont in the festivities of the table, and as one temptation, yielded to, clears the path for another, he was led to play; unaccustomed to gaming, he rose from the table a loser of a large sum. The report quickly spread, but his mistress received the information from a better source;—the lover himself wrote to her with the confession of his error. “I still love you,” was the reply, “but you are no longer the same, and we must not meet again. Farewell.”

An Italian gentleman at Paris, the firmest item of whose creed was, that none but Italians could possibly sing well, refused to admit that Sontag (whom he had never heard) could be at all equal to the singers of Italy. With great difficulty he was induced to hear her. After listening five minutes, he rose to

CH. XII. depart. “But do stay,” said his friend, “you
1827. will be convinced presently.” “I know it,”
said the Italian, “and therefore I go.”

It was reported, I know not with what correctness, that, during her residence at Berlin, a young man of rank there was so desperately enamoured of her, as to resort to the romantic expedient of hiring himself, in disguise, as a servant in the family, to have the pleasure of constantly seeing her, nor was the truth suspected by the object of his adorations, or any one else, until the gentleman's own relations discovered him, and removed him from the vicinity of the attraction.

I wrote to Mademoiselle Sontag in September, offering her two thousand pounds and a benefit for the season. She was then at Paris. I received the following reply to my letter.

“ Paris, ce 4^{me} Aout, 1826,

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“ MONSIEUR,

“ Bien flattée de la proposition obligeante que vous voulez bien m'adresser, je ne manque pas de vous déclarer, avec bien des regrets, qu'il m'est impossible de l'accepter pour le moment, car je suis liée par mon contrat de Berlin, encore pour un an, dans cette ville, où je vais retourner incessamment. Après cette époque je rentrerais dans mon nouvel engagement à Paris, et j'emploierais mon premier congé de deux mois pour l'année 1828, afin de venir à Londres. Vous voyez cette époque est encore bien éloignée et je ne puis que regretter de n'être pas à même à présent de vous témoigner, verbalement, les assurances de la haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

“ Monsieur,

“ Votre très humble servante,

“ HENRIETTE SONTAG,

“ John Ebers, Esq., &c. &c.”

“ Cantatrice.”

The subscribers to the Opera and the public were, however, so anxious to hear this lady, that I determined, if possible, to remove the obstacle in the way of an engagement with so desirable a performer. I wrote to her again, offering, in case of her coming to London, to pay the forfeiture which she

CH. XII. might incur by the breach of her contract at
 1827. Berlin. To which proposition I received the
 answer as beneath.

“ Berlin, ce 18 d’Octobre, 1826.

“ Veuillez bien, Monsieur, excuser le retard de cette réponse à la très honorée vôtre, en conséquence des immenses occupations qui m’obsèdent naturellement après une si longue absence. Je suis désolée, Monsieur, d’être dans l’impossibilité d’accepter votre offre obligeante, vu que dans les contrats Allemands il n’est jamais question de dédits, comme cela est un usage absolument inconnu chez nous. L’Administration ici vient au surplus de refuser chaque arrangement avec celle de Paris, donc je suis persuadée que chaque démarche que je pourrais tenter à ce sujet serait infructueuse.

“ Mon engagement de Paris commence au mois de Décembre 1827, et mon premier congé de deux mois est au mois d’Avril 1828. Si à cette époque vous agréiez que je vienne chanter une certaine quantité des rôles à Londres, je serais ravie d’avoir le plaisir de faire votre connoissance et de voir la plus belle ville de l’Europe. C’est avec une haute considération que j’ai l’honneur d’être,

“ Monsieur,

“ Votre très humble servante,

“ Monsieur Monsieur
 John Ebers, &c.”

“ HENRIETTE SONTAG,
 “ Cantatrice de la Chapelle de
 S. M. le Roi de Prusse.”

I afterwards, in January, endeavoured to make an engagement with her for two months of the season, in the hopes of her being able to obtain a congé for that period, offering her in recompense twenty thousand francs (eight hundred and thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence); but her engagements at Berlin, she informed me, would prevent her accepting my proposal. At the same time she politely renewed the expression of her willingness to enter into arrangements for London for the season of 1828.

I had also corresponded and formed an engagement with Miss Fanny Ayton. She was to have arrived here in December or the beginning of January; but Puzzi found her in the latter month at Milan, just setting off; and she arrived here in the subsequent part of January. She had been received with the greatest favour in Italy, and was celebrated by verses, processions, and all the means by which the Italians are accustomed

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CH. XII. ^{1827.} to express their admiration. At Genoa she was crowned at the theatre. A near relative of Miss Ayton's, who accompanied her, wrote thus on the subject: "There was a fête made for Fanny last week in the theatre, and a beautiful crown descended from the top, supported by two white pigeons, which were presented to her amidst shouts of astounding and unbounded applause; when she had sung her air, the theatre was hung with white festoons and flowers on the occasion, and showers of sonnets, with quantities of the most beautiful flowers, were, from time to time, thrown upon the stage." She was engaged here for five hundred pounds.

While these engagements were forming for the opera, those for the ballet were going on through the intervention of Lord Bruce, who was then in Paris, and obligingly undertook this difficult business, aided by Mr. D'Egville, who went over for the purpose.

Brocard was again engaged for the season,

at twelve hundred pounds. To fill up the other departments of the ballet did not prove very easy. CH. XII.
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The first new engagement made was that of Mademoiselle Buron, a dancer of some personal attractions, and great professional merit. At the opening of the season, she was the most admired of the débutantes in the ballet. She was to receive five hundred pounds.

Fleurot, Copère, and Olivier were re-engaged. Mademoiselle Perceval also returned to the King's Theatre.

The endeavours made to obtain a first-rate dancer encountered many obstacles. Paul, whom we sought to engage, demanded sixteen hundred pounds, which was refused; and when we wished to engage Coulon in his stead, Dubois, the manager of the Académie, who was desirous of supporting Paul, prevented Coulon's congé from being granted. Mademoiselle Brocard en-

CH. XII. ^{1827.} deavoured to procure Coulon's congé; "the mere mention of whose name," wrote D'Egville, "put Dubois in such a violent rage, that she actually ran out of his room in fear of more serious consequences." The administration also refused to permit Albert or Ferdinand to come to London. Gosselin and Blazis, two male dancers of merit, were, however, obtained. The engagement of each was seven hundred pounds.

Lord Bruce, whilst engaged in these negotiations, also endeavoured to re-engage Porto for the opera, but ineffectually: he required a thousand pounds. A proposal was then made to him for half the season, by Rossini, at my request; he became furious at the offer, and swore he would go to Verona or to the devil, sooner than accept an engagement for half a season. He was consequently not engaged.

Many other engagements were attempted to be made, both in the opera and ballet,

which failed, either by reason of prior en- CH. XII.
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gagements, or from the inability of procuring
congés. Among the performers thus tried
for, were Donzelli, Mlle. Tebaldi, and Pau-
line.

The Opera opened for the season on the second of December, with 'La Vestale,' an opera of Spontini's, and the one by which he is principally known. He objected to its performance in London, considering the means of representation there inadequate to do justice to his composition. To whatever cause it might be attributable, 'La Vestale' met with but very moderate success in London.

The mounting of this, the first performance of the season, afforded me an illustration of the obliging disposition of Madame Biagioli. The part of the first Vestal was given to her; she objected to it as a second part, and refused to go through the rehearsal. This she, for some time, persevered in; at length,

CH. XII. after putting a stop to the business for a
1827. time, and occasioning a great deal of discussion, correspondence, and conversation, she changed her mind, and consented to play her part.

This opera required great attention in the mechanical department, in the wardrobe, and the properties. It abounded in processions, and interspersed divertissements, and is, on the whole, as much a *spectacle* as an opera.

The next novelty was ‘La Schiava in Bagdad,’ the second of Pacini’s operas brought out here during my management. In this opera, Zuchelli, after being absent from the theatre since the year 1822, was again introduced, performing the part of the Caliph of Bagdad. This opera was much stronger in cast of parts than ‘La Vestale’: Zuchelli, Curioni, De Begnis, and Caradori performing the principal characters.

The music of ‘La Schiava in Bagdad’ was



Drawn & Engraved by B. Holl.

Miss Fanny Ayton.

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pleasing, and afforded the various performers CH. XII.
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good opportunities of displaying their talents. Many of the pieces in it were encored each night. The part of Rustano was performed by De Begnis with infinite humour and comic effect.

In the beginning of February, Miss Fanny Ayton made her débüt. She is a native of Macclesfield, whence she went to London, to obtain the best musical instructions that her own country could afford. Not satisfied with these, she visited Italy, where, by incessant application, she made great progress, both in musical science and the improvement of her voice, which was not naturally of a very excellent character, being thin and meagre. She had resolved, I believe, not to débüt on any English boards but those of the King's Theatre; and at one-and-twenty she appeared there as prima donna—a rank which she had sustained at the Teatro la Fenice, at Venice, and other

CH. XII. theatres in Italy. She was an excellent
1827. { Italian scholar, and understood German—
acquirements which the superiority of her
abilities, aided by uncommon industry, rendered easy to her.

She came out as Ninetta, in ‘La Gazza Ladra,’ in which she evinced talents as an actress, which have been since more abundantly displayed by her performances on the English stage. In this opera Madame Vestris performed the part of Pippo admirably. Unfortunately, her engagement at Covent Garden would not permit of her continuance at the King’s Theatre this season.

The time now arrived when Madame Brizzi was to arrive here, and, accordingly, I received a note, signifying that she was at the Sabloniere, in Leicester Square. Impatient to introduce myself to this much-desired accession to the Theatre, who had been so strongly recommended, I lost no time in hastening, accompanied by the di-

rector of the music, to welcome the lady to CH. XII.
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her new scene of action. I found the lady
not very young, short in stature, and rather
enbonpoint. She complained of a violent
cold and general indisposition; talked of her
débût, and some kindred topics, and uncon-
sciously impressed both myself and M. Bochsa
with no favourable anticipation of what the
result of this débût would prove.

Several operas were necessarily put in
rehearsal, and some even announced for the
appearance of this lady, and changed again
in consequence of some unheard of obstacle,
arising from her dislike or incapability of
particular parts. In the interim were per-
formed ‘La Schiava in Bagdad,’ and ‘Il
Turco in Italia,’ in which Miss Fanny Ayton
played the principal characters. A new ballet
was also mounted, ‘Le Siège de Cythère,’
a production of D’Egville’s, which met with
considerable success.

Signora Toso was introduced to the public

CH. XII. in 'Pietro l'Eremita,' in which she took the
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part of Agia. The interest excited by her
promised appearance, increased, perhaps, by
the mistake of the name already adverted to,
filled the house with a crowded and ex-
pectant audience. Toso proved anything
but an insipid singer; to most she was a
highly pleasing, and to all a striking per-
former. Her uncommon stature at once
arrested the attention of a spectator, and
her voice, powerful and rich, equally de-
manded the attention of a hearer. Her
musical style was good, and not disfigured
by florid excrescences; but her powers had
not received the full cultivation requisite to
constitute a first-rate singer, and her débüt
at once as prima donna, had the usual effect
of checking the progress of improvement,
which a commencement in a less aspiring
rank would have probably encouraged.

Much admiration was excited by the per-
sonal advantages of this singer, which went

far to justify the animated representations CH. XII.
of Puzzi. But as an actress she was less 1827.
eminent, as neither in deportment nor in
expression of countenance were the passion
and feeling of the parts she sustained suf-
ficiently developed; and this defect was
rendered the more obvious by the peculiar
height of her figure, which required pro-
portionably more energy of action. In the
character of Agia she had to contend with
the recollections of Camporesé and Ronzi de
Begnisi, both excellent representatives of the
part.

The reception of Toso in London was
sufficiently flattering, both in public and by
families of distinction, who patronised her.
Presents and compliments testified the esti-
mation in which she was held; at the house
of a lady of quality whom she visited, vases
were filled with hyacinths, in allusion, equally
polite and ingenious, to her name, *Giacinta*,
which signifies that flower. She remained

CH. XII. a favourite so long as she appeared con-
1827. stantly on the stage; after her marriage with Signor Puzzi, which occurred about three months after her arrival here, she less frequently performed. She has this season no engagement at the Theatre, but still sings with applause at concerts.

‘Ricciardo e Zoraide’ ensued, in which Toso performed Zoraide, and Brizzi took the part of Zomira in this opera. As a prima donna she did not succeed, but as a seconda she was qualified to maintain a respectable station, and her excellent disposition gained her many friends. She possessed no small degree of taste and science, but her voice was too weak to qualify her for first parts.

She next appeared in Pippo, in ‘La Gazza Ladra,’ and at the same time, Signor Galli made his débût in ‘Fernando.’ This excellent bass-singer had long been popular on the Continent, and had come here from the

Théâtre Italien in Paris, the place of his last CH. XII.
1827. engagement. Of the superiority of his qualifications both as an actor and singer, a somewhat uncommon uniformity of opinion existed. Nor were his natural abilities unequalled by his knowledge of his profession. Zuchelli was too firmly established as a favourite in England, to be easily superseded; but many of his admirers found a difficulty in contending for his decided superiority to Galli. The voice of the latter was less flexible than Zuchelli's, but its tone was deep and full, and it swelled on the ear with a volume of sound. This was the opera in which he had been accustomed to make his débûts in most of the capitals in Europe. The 'Gazza Ladra' was given in Paris, directly after it had been heard in London. It was got up for Madame Fodor's benefit, and was performed at the Académie; this was the first time Galli had been heard

CH. XII. in Paris, and he made an extraordinary
1827. sensation.

An engagement having been again formed with Madame Pasta, on the same terms as in the preceding season, she appeared in the operas of 'Tancredi,' and 'Romeo e Giulietta,' parts of both which were performed. These were succeeded by 'Semiramide.'

On this occasion, Brambilla made her débüt. Puzzi had heard her at Milan, when she was a pupil of the Conservatorio, and on his representation, the father of Signora Toso was sent back from England, to bring her over. She was engaged for three hundred and fifty pounds. She had never before appeared on a stage: consequently, her acting was that of a new performer; but her rich, sweet voice, her youth and great beauty, were quite sufficient to ensure the admiration of an audience. She was a pupil of the Conservatorio of Milan, where she had

acquired a correct knowledge. Her taste CH. XII.
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was naturally good ; her voice was a full and
sweet mezzo-soprano.

Brambilla was certain of popularity, for her beauty ensured it, had her voice been deficient. “ She has the finest eye,” said a gay Cardinal, “ the sweetest voice, and the best disposition—if she is discovered to possess any other merits, the safety of the Catholic Church will require her excommunication.”

Galli performed the part of Assur ; according to Rossini, he was the only person who ever filled that part.

Pasta was received as she is always received. Her stay at Naples had increased her reputation abroad ; among the Neapolitans, she was the all-engrossing subject.

In the beginning of June, Pasta took her benefit, and the opera of ‘ Maria Stuarda, Regina di Scozia,’ was mounted. This Opera was so far successful, as to lead to the conclusion that, had it been presented in its

CH. XII. original state, its good fortune would pro-
1827. bably have been complete. But never was any opera so “translated” from its original mould and features. Scarcely a single part in the piece escaped unchanged, so bent were the performers on introducing additions for the gratification of their amour propre. The extraneous introductions were innumerable; and Signor Coccia’s music had liberties taken with it almost sufficient to destroy its identity.

The music of this opera was not without merit, even in its disguised state; but its general character was too sombre and melancholy, to be pleasing throughout—the mind and the ear equally wanted relief. The drama of the piece was better than usual; Signor Giannone, the poet, had discharged his task with skill, though some occasional errors betrayed the difficulty of a foreigner representing, with accuracy, the scenes and characters of a country, with

which his audience is familiar, a subject on CH. XII.
1827.
which it is unnecessary to add any thing to
the observations previously made in refer-
ence to ‘La Donna del Lago.’

The mounting of this opera was as expensive as of any that I remember. The composer (to whom the ownership of the copyright was reserved) received a hundred and fifty pounds, and the poet fifty. The dresses of the principal characters, the Queens Mary and Elizabeth, Leicester, and Burleigh, were studiously magnificent; much of the scenery was new, and the entire cost of the representation could not fall much short, I conceive, and I speak from an estimate of the moment, of two thousand pounds.

Toso appeared in this Opera—since her last performance she had acquired the additional name of Puzzi, the marriage between her and her engager having taken place in the interim.

After Maria Stuart, Mercadante’s ‘Di-

CH. XII. done,' which Puzzi had brought over, was
 1827. produced for his wife's benefit. This opera had no success; it was a production of the school of Rossini, and of that school only the first-rate pieces can establish themselves. Rossini's 'L'Inganno Felice' was produced the same evening. It was a one-act piece, with some agreeable passages; but, on the whole, its fate was no better than that of its companion.

These were the last novelties brought out during this season of my management. The Theatre closed on the 4th of August, leaving two nights due, the cause of which shall be presently entered into.

The ballets of the season were the following: 'La Noce de Tamar,' 'Le Siège de Cythère,' 'La Rose et le Bouton,' and 'Le Page Inconstant.'

The Operas were—

La Vestale,	-	-	-	<i>Spontini.</i>
La Schiava in Bagdad,	-	-	-	<i>Pacini.</i>

La Gazza Ladra,	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	CH. XII. 1827.
Il Turco in Italia,	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	
Pietro l'Eremita,	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	
Ricciardo e Zoraide,	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	
Romeo e Giulietta,	-	-	<i>Zingarelli.</i>	
Semiramide	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	
Medea,	-	-	<i>Mayer.</i>	
Tancredi,	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	
Maria Stuarda,	-	-	<i>Coccia.</i>	
Didone,	-	-	<i>Mercadante.</i>	
L'Inganno Felice, (farsa)	-	-	<i>Rossini.</i>	

The principal engagements of the season are comprised in the subjoined list.

FOR THE OPERA.

	£.
Ayton,	500
Biagioli,	300
Brambilla,	350
Brizzi,	400
Caradori,	1200
Cornega,	200
Curioni,	1450
De Begnis, Signor,	800
Di Giovanni,	75
De'Angeli,	150
De'Angeli, Made.	100

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	£.
Déville, - - - - -	200
Galli, - - - - -	870
Giovanola, - - - - -	300
Giubelei, - - - - -	100
Pasta, - - - - -	2365
Rubbi, - - - - -	120
Toso, - - - - -	350
Torri, - - - - -	350
Vestris, Mad. - - - - -	150
Zuchelli, - - - - -	1130

FOR THE BALLET.

	£.
Angelica, - - - - -	80
Blazis, - - - - -	700
Brocard, - - - - -	1200
Boisgerard, - - - - -	250
Buron, - - - - -	500
Copère, - - - - -	200
D'Egville, - - - - -	1300
Du Bois, - - - - -	60
Fleurot, - - - - -	600
Gosselin, - - - - -	700
Merante, Mons. and Mad. - - - - -	300
Olivier, - - - - -	100
O'Brien, - - - - -	80
Perceval, - - - - -	200
Vestris, Mons. Bernardo, - - - - -	200

That the Ballet was this season inferior, CH. XII.
I am free to admit, but this was not 1827.
owing to any want of exertion on the manager's part. The difficulties which occurred in attempting many engagements of superior artists were insuperable, so jealous was the Administration of Paris of our endeavours.

The losses I had sustained in the course of the six preceding seasons, and causes which, about the time of the last of those, occasioned such general embarrassment throughout the country, had so circumscribed me, that the rent of the Theatre was now in arrear, and the assignees of Chambers became impatient for the liquidation of their claim. In the early part of the season, an arrangement was made between us, by which they agreed to an extension of time for the payment of the money due, on certain securities being given, which was done. About the month of June, however, the assignees

CH. XII. considered it more beneficial for the estate
^{1827.}
of Chambers not to prolong their forbear-
ance, and they accordingly put an agent into
the receipt of the income of the Theatre.
Much negociation passed between all the
parties concerned, but the assignees persisted
in the determination they had formed, that
my connexion with the Theatre should not
be continued. It was their intention to
take the concern into their own management
for the benefit of the creditors, but circum-
stances rendered the execution of this design
impracticable or ineligible.

In consequence of this resolution, I was
unable to obtain a renewal of the lease, and
at the latter end of this season, the embar-
rassments I have adverted to, caused the
performances to be abruptly discontinued, as
already mentioned. To pursue this detail,
would be to give the history, not of the
King's Theatre, but of my own individual

concerns, in which the public could take no manner of interest. CH. XII.
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Yet, notwithstanding these things, the season of 1827 had been attended with the least loss of all that had passed under my management, and the magnitude of the rent alone prevented it from being highly profitable. The amount of loss was two thousand nine hundred and seventy-four pounds; the receipts amounting to forty-eight thousand three hundred and eighty-nine pounds, and the expenditure to fifty-one thousand three hundred and sixty-three pounds.

The management being thus once more vacant, proposals were made for it by Mr. Ayrton, Signor de Begnis, and subsequently by Messrs. Laporte and Laurent, the present managers, who have taken it for the season, at the rent of eight thousand pounds. The former gentleman, in whom the actual conduct of the concern is reposed, was previ-

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ously well known as a performer, and one of the managers of the French Theatre in London; and, as an actor, had obtained a deserved celebrity. M. Laurent has been engaged in theatrical speculations for the last two years, first, by establishing a company of English actors in Paris, and subsequently by taking the Italian Opera off the hands of the French Government.

Since the commencement of the new management, Mademoiselle Sontag has been engaged at the King's Theatre, having arrived here at the time mentioned in her letters to me. Mademoiselles Garcia and Blazis are also announced, with other performers of note, the chief of whom are Pisaroni and Donzelli. Hitherto the season has been a prosperous one; there is every prospect of its being eventually so, and I, for one, do not fail to entertain the best wishes for the success of the new enterprisers.

Such is the account of the King's Theatre CH. XII.
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during the time of its being under my management*. The following lists contain the

* I regret to state that, since the earlier part of this volume was written, an amiable and able individual, whose name occurs there, has experienced the common fate of mortality; I mean M. Boisgerard, the second Maître de Ballet. This gentleman was a Frenchman of good extraction, and, at the period of the French Revolution, was attached to the Royal party. When Sir Sidney Smith was confined in the Temple, Boisgerard acted up to his principles by attempting, and, with great personal risk, effecting, the escape of that distinguished officer, whose friends were making every effort for his liberation. Having obtained an impression of the seal of the Directorial Government, he affixed it to an order, forged by himself, for the delivery of Sir Sidney into his care. Accompanied by a friend, disguised like himself, in the uniform of an officer of the revolutionary army, he did not scruple personally to present the fictitious document to the keeper of the Temple; who, opening a small closet, took thence some original document, with the writing and seal of which he carefully compared the forged order. Desiring the adventurers to wait a few minutes, he then withdrew, and locked the door after him. Giving themselves up for lost, the confederates determined to resist, sword in hand, any attempt made to secure them. The period which thus elapsed may be imagined as one of the most horrible suspense to Boisgerard and his companion; his own account of his feelings at the time was extremely interesting. Left alone, and in doubt whether each succeeding moment might not be attended by a discovery involving the safety of his life, the acuteness of his organs of sense was heightened to painfulness: the least noise thrilled

CH. XII. names of the different performances represented at the Theatre within this period.
 1827.

OPERAS.

La Gazza Ladra.

L'Agnese.

BALLETS.

L'Offrande de Terpsichore.

L'Impromptu Allégorique.

through his brain, and the gloomy apartment in which he sat seemed filled with strange images. They preserved their self-possession ; and, after the lapse of a few minutes, their anxiety was determined by the re-appearance of the gaoler, accompanied by his captive, who was delivered to Boisgerard. But here, a new and unlooked for difficulty occurred : Sir Sidney Smith, not knowing Boisgerard, refused, for some time, to quit the prison ; and considerable address was required on the part of his deliverers, to overcome his scruples. At last, the precincts of the Temple were cleared ; and, after going a short distance in a fiacre, then walking, then entering another carriage, and so on, adopting every means of baffling pursuit, the fugitives got to Havre, where Sir Sidney was put on board an English vessel. Boisgerard, on his return to Paris, (for he quitted Sir Sidney at Havre,) was a thousand times in dread of detection : tarrying at an *auberge*, he was asked whether he had heard the news of Sir Sidney's escape ; the querist adding, that four persons had been arrested on suspicion of having been instrumental in it. However, he escaped all these dangers, and continued at Paris until his visit to England, which took place after the peace of Amiens. A pension had been granted to Sir Sidney Smith for his meritorious services ; and, on Boisgerard's arrival here, a reward of a similar nature was bestowed on him, through the influence of Sir Sidney, who took every opportunity of testifying his gratitude.

OPERAS.

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Tancredi.	Œnone et Paris.
La Clemenza di Tito.	La Paysanne Supposée.
Il Turco in Italia.	Nina.
Il Don Giovanni.	Finette et l'Eveillé.
Le Nozze di Figaro.	Le Carnaval de Venise.
Il Barbiere di Seviglia	La Foire de Smyrne.
Otello.	Les Jeux de Flore et Zéphyre.
Pietro l'Eremita.	Alcide.
I Pretendenti Delusi.	Le Seigneur Généreux.
Il Barone di Dolsheim.	Pandore.
La Donna del Lago.	Les Pages du Duc de Ven-
Elisa e Claudio.	dôme.
Ricciardo e Zoraide.	Cendrillon.
Matilde e Corradino.	Le Petit Chaperon Rouge.
Zelmira.	Le Triomphe de l'Amour.
Semiramide.	Offrande aux Graces.
Il Fanatico per la Musica.	La Noce du Village.
Romeo e Giulietta.	Alfred.
Così fan tutte.	Aline.
L'Italiana in Algieri.	Justine et Lisette.
Nina.	Alphonse et Léonore.
L'Adelina.	Honneur aux Dames.
Il Crociato in Egitto.	L'Adoration au Soleil.
Teobaldo e Isolina.	Le Songe d'Ossian.
Medea.	La Fête Hongroise.
Aureliano in Palmira.	Le Page Inconstant.

354 SEVEN YEARS OF THE KING'S THEATRE.

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OPERAS.

BALLETS.

La Cenerentola.

La Vestale.

La Schiava in Bagdad.

Maria Stuart.

Didone.

L'Inganno Felice.

Jadis et Aujourd'hui.

La Coquette Soumise.

Cléopâtre.

Clari.

Justine, ou la Cruche Cassée.

Le Temple de la Concorde.

Le Bal Champêtre.

La Naissance de Vénus.

Le Mariage Secret.

La Noce de Tamar.

Le Siège de Cythère.

La Rose et le Bouton.

CHAPTER XIII.

Maledetta l'impresa
 De' musici teatri! Onor, contento,
 Piacer non somministra; è grande il risico,
 Il guadagno è miseria
 L'ingerenza e follia, capricci, impegni,
 Precedenze, raggiri,
 Ci sconcertano ognor; guerra ci fanno
 Ingiusti protettori,
 Insolenti protetti,
 Piccosi amanti, abbiamo
 Fra color che paghiamo
 I più fieri nemici, ognun ci biasima,
 Ci deride, c' insegna,
 Ci da consigli. Ad ogni prima recita
 Il cor ci trema: ad ogni fin di mese
 Ci tocca a sospirar—
 ——— Oh se n' esco una volta!

CHAPTER XIII.

Local account of the King's Theatre.—Sketch of its routine.—
 Box-tickets—Observations on their admission to the Pit.—
 Employés of the House.—Opera—Director—Composer—
 Details of mounting an Opera—Rehearsals—Opera Establishment.—Ballet Establishment.—Accommodations for Performers—Privileges of leading Performers in this respect.—Dressing-rooms.—Manager.—Habits of Life of Performers.—Conclusion.

CH. XIII. **HAVING** now concluded the sketch of the History of the King's Theatre, during the period of my connection with it, I have arrived at the legitimate end of my task. A few observations, however, on the detail of the business of the House, and connected topics, may not be uninteresting to those whose acquaintance with the opera is slight, and will not long detain the reader.

The present structure of the King's Theatre, situated in the Haymarket, was built by Novosielski in the year 1789, and has been

much admired for the adaptation of its shape CH. XIII. to the purpose of effectually transmitting the sounds from the stage to the audience ; but the part allotted to the stage is too diminutive for the business of the Theatre, a defect occasionally productive of great inconvenience. The same cause renders it necessary to have the dressing-rooms under the stage, as also the depôt of part of the wardrobe, the remainder being deposited between the ceiling and the roof of the house. Indeed, the necessity of improving to the utmost every inch of room, has had the effect of making the passages to the stage from the different parts of the house perfect labyrinths.

The audience part consists of the pit, boxes, and gallery ; the boxes being disposed in five tiers, four entire, and the fifth interrupted in the centre part by the gallery, which is on the same level, and extends above the thirteen most central boxes of the inferior tier.

CH. XIII.

The entire number of boxes is two hundred and two, which are let either for the season or for single nights, and are calculated for the reception of six persons each box; and six ivory tickets are accordingly issued to the subscriber who takes a box. These tickets are admissible to the pit; hence it is customary for subscribers to dispose of their tickets on those nights on which they have no occasion for all or any of them. As, however, the tickets are strictly tickets of admission to the boxes whose numbers they bear, some inconvenience has occasionally arisen from the persons employed to sell these tickets, omitting to inform the purchasers that, although *box* tickets, they are sold as *pit* tickets only.

The possible occurrence, however, of a trifling mistake, which is soon rectified, is amply counterbalanced by the many conveniences attendant on the admissibility of the box-tickets to the pit. Whilst the heavy

engagements of performers, and the other CH. XIII.
great expenses of the Theatre, render the
subscription to the boxes necessarily so high,
it is only equitable that the subscribers
should have the means of, at least, a partial
indemnity for the expense they incur, when-
ever circumstances prevent their availing
themselves in person, or with their own par-
ties, of their right of admission. The power
of transferring the tickets to the pit is
objected to, as being the means of intro-
ducing improper company to that part of the
House, as it affords the means of admission
at a lower rate than the door price ; but the
practical inconvenience of this does not,
perhaps, make itself greatly felt. And even
if the evil was such as alleged, the infringe-
ment on the rights of the subscribers, by
denying their tickets to the pit, would be no
effectual remedy, as the same principle would
exclude all the orders given by performers
and the persons connected with the House,

CH. XIII. the facilities afforded by which are, at least, as capable of being perverted; and to do this would be obviously impracticable.

There can be no doubt, that if the box-tickets were excluded from the pit, the society in the pit would be very different; instead of all the men of fashion meeting there, the company would be such as frequent the pits of other theatres; in consequence of which, the price would necessarily be lowered. One of the *agrémens* of the King's Theatre is the certainty every one has of meeting his friends from all parts of the world. It is the resort equally of the lovers of music, the dance, and of those who care little for either, but who like to meet each other, and feast their eyes by gazing on all the most beautiful as well as the best drest women resident in this country.

To take care of the House, and to attend to the doors of the Theatre, to the boxes and the stage, a great number of servants are

employed. The housekeeper's situation is CH. XIII. one of some trust, and usually filled by a person of corresponding character. The housekeeper superintends the state of the Theatre, as to cleanliness and neatness, has apartments in the House, and a box appropriated to her own use. The box-keepers number about twenty, and receive salaries amounting aggregately to about three hundred pounds. The expense of the military guard employed at the door amounts annually to upwards of one hundred and fifty pounds.

The company of performers are naturally to be considered under two distinct classes, as attached to the opera or to the ballet. The opera is under the guidance of the director of the music, if any is employed. The director assists the manager in the selection of the performances; and when fixed upon, he distributes the parts to the singers, and directs the general routine of representation, the effecting of which, in

CH. XIII. the minuter details, devolves on the stage-manager, and the conductor of the music. By these, according to their several departments, the due execution of the parts is attended to, the training of the chorus-singers and inferior performers, the management of the scenery, and the performance of the orchestra. The engagements for the orchestra are in general made by the director; those of the performers, and other persons employed, by the manager.

I have already stated my opinion, that in this country a composer of operas is an unnecessary part of the establishment of the King's Theatre. Should one, however, be retained, his duties are regulated by the terms of his engagement, and consist primarily in the composing of operas for the Theatre, and attending to the mounting of them, when ready to be put in rehearsal.

The composer, on applying himself to his task, moulds the first rough score of his

music on the scale of the piano-forte, and CH. XIII. this, when completed, forms the groundwork, or skeleton of the entire piece. The music having been applied to the words which are supplied by the poet of the Theatre, the next step is to adapt the different parts of the music to the capabilities of the performers, to whom the characters of the opera, when cast, are to be allotted, in order that the best effects may be produced with the means of the Theatre; and in this resides the chief advantage of a composer being engaged to produce operas for a particular theatre. This adaptation being made, the scene of operations having been hitherto confined to the composer's apartment, the concert-room of the Theatre, or some room of similar dimensions, is resorted to, and an embryo rehearsal of the whole vocal part of the opera gone through, the accompaniment being as yet limited to the composer's piano-forte.

CH. XIII. Before proceeding to the stage, the orchestral parts require to be set, and these are now added, according to the nature of the expression to be conveyed, and the strength of the instrumental music of the Theatre. In many of Rossini's operas, parts are composed for military bands behind the scenes, in addition to the orchestra.

The opera having by these gradations received its form, and the composer's finishing touches being bestowed upon it, it is committed to rehearsal in the regular manner, the getting up, or mounting, being performed under the superintendence of the composer, with the director, conductor, and stage-manager, though two of these latter characters frequently unite in the same person.

The word rehearsal summons up, to all practically acquainted with its meaning, a scene beyond description. If the performances of a theatre are intended to represent

the truth of human nature, a rehearsal is CH. XIII.
the living reality,—the scene where the veil
is rent in twain, and all the turmoil laid
open to the view which can be produced by
the undisguised operations of vanity, self-
love, and jealousy. The fabled crowds who
petitioned heaven to allot their parts in life
otherwise than Fate had cast them, are but a
type of the inmates of a theatre behind the
scenes, when contending for prominent cha-
racters in an opera.

Perhaps with the very first performers
there is not much of this, as their right
to the principal parts cannot be disputed.
But dire is the struggle among all below.
A part rather better than another is an apple
of contention, which, to manager, director,
and conductor, proves a most bitter fruit.
As every person likes to have that character
which may best serve—not the general effect
of the piece, or the interests of the theatre,
which are wholly immaterial—but his or her

CH. XIII. own object in making the greatest display possible ; and as non-concession is the permanent rule of the place, the opera is placed in the pleasing predicament of being able neither to get one way nor the other. The prima donna, whose part is settled, attends the rehearsal, and the seconda, being displeased with her own station in the piece, will not go on ; and the first lady, indignant at being detained to no purpose, goes away, and the business is over for the day. If the manager is positive, the lady falls ill. Biagioli, being refused a part she wanted in 'Elisa e Claudio,' took to her bed for two days, in consequence, as she said, of being so afflicted by my decision.

The refusal to proceed is the more effectual engine, because it puts all the rest of the company out of humour at their time being occupied needlessly : all complain, and a dialogue goes on, in which every body talks at once ; and probably three different languages,

at least, being simultaneously employed by CH. XIII. different speakers, the result may be conceivable, but not expressible. The signori protest, the signore exclaim, the choruses are wonderfully in concert in their lamentations, the director commands, intreats, stamps, and swears, with equal success, and, in the midst of the Babel, the gentlemen of the orchestra, who wish all the singers at the devil, endeavour to get over the business of the day by playing on without the vocal music. The leader of the orchestra, finding all ineffectual, puts on his hat, and walks away, followed by violins, basses, trombones, and kettle-drums, en masse, and the scene at length concludes as it may, the manager, composer, and director being left to calculate together the progress of business.

The general wish before alluded to, on the part of performers, of strengthening their own parts by the introduction of extraneous matter, without regard to its effect on the

CH. XIII. general tone and character of the piece, is a principal cause of disunion between the director and the singers, and seldom overcome without some sacrifice.

To know how these jarring elements are to be composed into harmony, requires almost the experience of a life. The flatteries, the compliances, the power of diplomacy, requisite to effect this object, are infinite. Decision and address are indispensable; to be too uncompromising is dangerous, but to be too accommodating is worse.

The opera being at length, with whatever sacrifices, put in a way of appearance, is announced, and when presented, the composer presides in person at the piano-forte the three first nights of its appearance.

The number of performers requisite to a perfect company for the presenting of operas, is now less definite than formerly, the dramatis personæ being in quantity more arbitrarily introduced into the piece. The

present establishment (May 1828), is con-CH. XIII.
stituted as follows:—

First Woman Soprana,	-	{ Mlle. Sontag.
		{ Mad. Pasta.
		{ Mad. Caradori.
Second Do. Do.	-	Mad. Castelli.
First Contralto,	-	Mad. Schütz.
Second Do.	-	Mlle. Brambilla.
First Bass,	-	Signor Porto.
Second Do.	-	— De' Angeli.
Basso Cantante,	-	— Zuchelli.
Buffo,	-	— Pellegrini.
First Tenor,	-	— Curioni.
Second Do.	-	— Torri.
Third Do.	-	— Deville.

The Chorus consists of sixteen men and twelve women singers, who receive annually together between six and seven hundred pounds.

The Ballet department comprises, a first and second Ballet-Master, and the following principal performers—

First Male Dancer, (at present) Mons. Albert.

CH. XIII.	Second Do.	-	-	Mons. Gosselin.
	Third Do.	-	-	—— D'Aumont.
	First Female Dancers,	-		{ Made. Anatole.
				{ Mlle. Brocard.
				{ Made. Le Compte.
				{ Mlle. Louisa.
	Second Do.	-	-	{ Milles. Copère.
				{ —— La Vasseur.
				{ —— Angelica.
				{ —— O'Brien.
				{ —— Leilaire.

The Corps de Ballet, comprising the dancers of inferior rank, consists of sixteen men and the like number of women.

Connected with the business of the stage are the

Scene Painter and his Assistants.

Property Man.

Head Tailor.

Head Mantua-maker.

Wardrobe Keeper.

Draper for the Men.

Do. for the Ladies.

The dresses are, at least in the estimation of foreigners, whether in the opera or ballet,

a subject of great moment, and of frequent CH. XIII. disagreement, as every singer or dancer has an almost invincible abhorrence of sparing the treasury, by making use of any dresses already in the wardrobe, however excellent, every one choosing to exercise his own taste in the adaptation of his garb.

The dresses naturally introduce the dressing-rooms, the regulations of which, as established by the usage of the theatre, are amusingly adapted to the rank of the performers. A prima donna is entitled to a separate dressing-room, with a sofa, and six wax candles ; a seconda donna, a dressing-room, without a sofa, and two wax-candles. The same principle obtains with the chief male performers, and with the first and second dancers of both sexes. Ludicrous as it may seem, these marks of precedence are insisted upon with the greatest exactness. Madame Vestris went beyond all others, and furnished herself with two additional candles ; and one

CH. XIII. night, there not being, by some inadvertency, candles enough in the house, she stood on the stage behind the curtain, and refused to dress for her part until the required number of lights was obtained.

The performers inferior in station to those I have mentioned, dress in two general rooms, appropriated respectively to the ladies and to the gentlemen of the company. There is, however, an universal desire for the distinction of separate rooms, and sometimes an express article of the engagement provides for this question.

The manager, as already mentioned, engages the performers and selects the performances, but his occupations, like his anxieties, are infinite. The engagements, it need not be now said, are attended with innumerable difficulties. This would be less the case were the negotiations conducted between the manager and performer, alone, without the intervention of third persons. But the crowd

of foreigners, by whom both singers and dancers are usually surrounded, frustrate numerous engagements. Patientless doctors, amateurs, and idlers haunt the houses of the performers, some of whom obtain an influence over them equally convenient to themselves and injurious to managers. Generally speaking, performers are not unreasonable in their own expectations, but the hangers on of their suite flatter their self-love, and excite them to make the most preposterous demands. The people who thus labour against the interests of a theatre, obtain nevertheless the greatest facilities of benefitting themselves through it, by the number of orders which, by means of the performers to whom they attach themselves, they are enabled to give away, thus acquiring a degree of consideration among those whom they oblige.

The performers are the more liable to influences of this kind, from their general

CH. XIII. hospitality to their own countrymen here, from among whom they generally select some favourite who manages their concerns, and is consulted on every undertaking, persons who occasion the more difficulty from not being the ostensible parties to treat with. These individuals usually form a part of the family, are included in the invitations given to their superiors, and hence acquire many opportunities of advancing their own interests.

The mode of life which obtains among the artists of the stage with whom my experience has brought me in contact, is, with a few exceptions towards either extreme, liberal and handsome, in proportion to their incomes. Both here and abroad I have been agreeably entertained at their houses, and at Paris I met at the table of Madame Pasta, including Rossini, almost all the musical talent of the place. She had a beautiful villa at Neuillé, where I also visited her, and found a similar assemblage.

Many of the performers are persons of considerable talents and acquirements; their mode of life, and frequent migrations to and from the principal cities of Europe, and perpetual change of society, give an ease and life to their conversation. Their foreign tastes and habits render their society more attractive; and could the situation of manager be divested of the cares and difficulties inherent to it, it would not be devoid of pleasure, in mingling with characters strongly marked, and often highly interesting. But as it is impossible to reconcile inconsistencies, he who embarks on the sea of management must be content to enjoy such rare moments of calm and sunshine as mingle with the storms to which he is exposed. For myself, I have rarely failed, even when most surrounded with difficulties, to make the most of the pleasant places into which my path has occasionally led, and have found in management, as in the uni- CH. XIII.

CH. XIII. versal business of life, that the best guardian against calamity is a disposition to be happy when in my power, and quietly to acquiesce when misfortune is inevitable.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

The Subscribers to the Boxes at the King's Theatre, 1789.

THE KING'S SIDE,	FIRST ROW.	THE PRINCE'S SIDE.
N. Marchioness of Stafford Lady G. L. Gower Marquis of Stafford Earl Gower Earl Galloway Lord A. Hamilton E. Duchess of Richmond Hon. Mrs. Damer Duke of Richmond Lord Egremont Lord G. Cavendish 1 Lady Chatham Miss Broderick Lord Chatham Lord Apsley Robert Smith, Esq. 2 Lady Cadogan Lord Cadogan Lord Barington Lord Walsingham 3 Lady Aylesbury Lady Mary Coke Lady Mount Edgcumbe General Conway — Jerningham, Esq. 4 Mrs. Boone Mrs. Calvert C. Boone, Esq. G. Tierney, Esq. 5 Lady Fairford Lady R. Bertie Lord Fairford Lord Sandys 6 Lady Sydney Miss Mary Pelham Lord Morton — Townshend, Esq. 7 Mrs. Scrimshire Lady Dudley Lord Dudley — Barham, Esq. 8 Mrs. Barkley Lord Palmerston A. Barklay, Esq. Wm. Knatchbull, Esq. 9 Lady Yonge Lady Buck Sir Geo. Yonge — Isted, Esq. 10, 11 Lady Essex Ditto Lady Coventry Hon. Mr. St. John Lord Malden Sir Fk. Standish — Somerville, Esq. 12 Lady C. Johnson Lady Aug. Clavering Lord Harcourt Lord Rawdon 13 Marchss. of Lansdowne Marquis of Lansdowne Right Hon. Mr. Pitt Miss Vernon	STAGE. ORCHESTRA. PIT. N.B.—The new additional Boxes are marked with Letters, instead of Numbers. 14 Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cumberland 15 His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland	I. Duchess of Gordon Lady C. Gordon Duke of Gordon Sir John Macpherson Hon. Col. Phipps Right Hon. Henry Dundas A. Lady Salisbury Lady Talbot Lord Talbot Lord Winchelsea Lord Duncannon 28 Lady Hawkesbury Lady Mary Duncan Miss Cope Lord Hawkesbury Lord Aberdeen 27 Mrs. Weddell Hon. Mrs. Watson Hon. Mr. Watson Sir John Ramsden 26 Lady M. Churchill Lord Buckinghamshire James Bradshaw, Esq. Richard Cox, Esq. George Ellis, Esq. 25 Lady B. Tollemache Ditto Lady L. Manners Duke of Queensberry 24 Hon. Mrs. Hobart Lady Lonsdale — Cooke, Esq. — Sullivan, Esq. 23 Hon. Mrs. Cornwallis Hon. Mrs. Townshend Lady North Lord North 22 Duchess of Hamilton Lady Louvaie Duke of Hamilton — M'Dowel, Esq. 21 Lady Dinevor Mrs. Pitt M. W. Pitt, Esq. W. Markham, Esq. 20 Duchess of St. Albans Lady Cath. Beauclerk Duke of St. Albans Thomas Brand, Esq. 19 Lady M. Fordyce Marquis of Carmarthen Lord Molesworth — Hamilton, Esq. Lady E. York 18 Mrs. Ellis Mrs. Viner Hon. W. Ellis Lord Petre General Paoli 16, 17 Lady Melbourne Lady Fauconberg Lord Melbourne Lord Fauconberg Lord Mulgrave Sir R. Milbank Hon. Mr. Wyndham

THE KING'S SIDE.	SECOND ROW.	THE PRINCE'S SIDE.
F. Lady Tyrconnel Lady Chesterfield Lady Georgiana Bulkley — Bulkley, Esq. Hon. Charles Monson O. Duchess of Devonshire Lady Eliz. Foster Hon. Mr. Lennox Duke of Devonshire Earl Spencer Mons. Calonne — Crawford, Esq. Cha. Grey, Esq. 58 Mrs. Crewe Lady Payne Lord Downe C. Greville, Esq. 57 Lady Sefton Lord Sefton Lord Abingdon Lord Chesterfield 56 Lady Weymouth Lady Aylesford Lord Aylesford Lord St. Asaph Lord Uxbridge Hon. T. Thynne 55 Lady Pembroke Lord Herbert Lord Palmerston Rich. Scott, Esq. 54 Mrs. Broadhead 53 Lady Irwin Ditto Lady W. Gordon Hon. Miss Ingram 52 Lord Milton Ditto Hon. Miss Damer Hon. Mrs. L. Damer 51 Lady Cunynghame 49 Lady Mary Bowlby 50 Lady Morton Lord Brudenell Lord Aylesbury Lord Mount Edgumbe Hon. Mr. Edgumbe Sir James Peachey Thomas Bowlby, Esq. 48 Lady Maynard Lord Maynard Ditto Duke of Bedford Ditto Ditto 47 Lady Stowell Duchess of Bolton Lord Stowell Duke of Bolton Lord Barrymore — Battine, Esq.	46 Lady Rumbold Mrs. Baker Mrs. Rigby Hale Mrs. Ellis Sir Thomas Rumbold — Ellis, Esq. 45 Lady Broughton Ditto Ditto Ditto 44 Lady J. Dawkins Miss Dawkins. Miss J. Dawkins H. Dawkins, Esq. 43 Lady Fitzwilliam Sir T. Dundas Lord Fitzwilliam Lord F. Cavendish 42 Mrs. Cawthorn Lady Smyth W. Braddyl, Esq. Lord Carbery 41 Duchess of Buccleugh Lady F. Douglas Duke of Buccleugh Duke of Montagu — Douglas, Esq.	K. Lady Ch. Curzon Lady Middleton Mrs. Ashton Curzon P. A. Curzon, Esq. — Mundy, Esq. — Mundy, Esq. B. Lady Howe Lady Altamont Earl Howe Lady Howe 29 Lady Duncannon Lady Spencer Lord Robert Spencer Colonel St. Leger 30 Mrs. Meynell Lord Macartney H. James, Esq. Tho. Steele, Esq. 31 Duchess of Marlborough Lady C. Spencer Lord Lucan Sir H. Bridgman 32 Duchess of Bedford Lord Albemarle Duchess of Gordon Lady Malden Duke of Bedford Lord Fielding 33 Lady Clarges Miss Bull Duke of Queensberry Sir P. Burrell R. Bull, Esq. — Musgrave, Esq. 34 Lady C. H. Cavendish Lord W. Russell Lord G. H. Cavendish Marquis of Worcester Robert Vyner, Esq. 35 Lady Jersey Earl Jersey Hon. Mr. C. Wyndham 35 Hon. Mrs. R. Stewart Mrs. Wallace Hon. — Howard, Esq. — Stevenson, Esq. 37, 38, Lady Hampden Mrs. Conyers Mrs. Brand Lord Hampden Lord Wentworth Lord Graham Earl Burford — Lindsay, Esq. 39 Lady Grantham Mrs. Pole Carew Lady Hardwicke Lord Somers Hon. Mr. Yorke — Cecil, Esq. 40 Lady Hume Mrs. J. Egerton Lord Hume Col. Egerton Sir A. Hume

THE KING'S SIDE.	THIRD ROW.	THE PRINCE'S ROW.
P. Mrs. Hibbert Lady Ridley — Long, Esq. Sir M. W. Ridley General Smith — Hibbert, Esq. G. Mrs. Morant Miss Crewe Edward Morant, Esq. General Johnston 59 Mrs. Pole Miss Forbes — Pole, Esq. Hon. E. Phipps 60 Mrs. Holt Ditto Miss Parsons — Calvert, Esq. 61 Lady Dysart J. Manners, Esq. Lady J. Halliday Miss Lowther Hon W. Tollemache 62 Lady Beauchamp Lady Ramsden Lady Darnley W. H. Lambton, Esq. Lord Malmsbury 63 Mrs. Fitzherbert Ditto Ditto H. R. H. P. of Wales H. R. H. D. of York 64 Lady Warren N. Dance, Esq. — Cousmacher, Esq. — Taylor, Esq. 65 Lady Horton Mrs. Braddyll Sir W. Horton W. Braddyll, Esq. 66 Mrs. Armstead Ditto Right Hon. Charles Fox Andrew St. John, Esq. 67 Lady Kinnaird Ditto Lord Kinnaird Lord Breadalbane 68 Lady Hannay Sir Samuel Hannay Miss Hannay J. Hannay, Esq. 69 Mrs. Middleton Ditto Mrs. Benn J. Benn, Esq. W. Holland, Esq. 70 Lady Charlotte Turton Mrs. Long Samuel Long, Esq. Lady Jane Long 71 Lady Grosvenor Miss Ellis Ditto Captain Porter	72 Lady Bulkley Sir George Warren Sir William Aston Jeremiah Crutchley, Esq. 73 Lord Ashburnham Ditto Ditto Ditto 74 C. B. Scrimshire Duke of Devonshire Lord Carlisle Thomas Greenville, Esq. 75 Mrs. Hastings Ditto Mrs. Vansittart	Lady Darnley Ditto Ditto Ditto Ditto Ditto C. Duchess of Ancaster Lady C. Bertie — Stepney, Esq. John Drummond, Esq. 88 Mrs. Sheridan 87 Lady B. Delme Lady J. Howard P. Delme, Esq. James Hare, Esq. — Gunning, Esq. 86 Lady Shaftesbury Ditto Sir James T. Long Ditto 85 Lady Fleming Lady Harrington Mrs. Pierce E. Lascelles, Esq. 84 Lady Carlisle Lady Sutherland Lord Carlisle — Crathorne, Esq. 83 Miss Hickey Ditto H. Howarth, Esq. Ditto 82 Mrs. Sawbridge Mrs. Lawrell — Calcraft, Esq. — Dumbleton, Esq. 81 Lady Asgill Mrs. Colville R. Colville, Esq. Captain Asgill 80 Lady Lade Ditto Sir John Lade Ditto 79 Lady Rous Miss Rous Sir John Rous Lieut. Col. Needham 78 Mrs. Blair Mrs. Lushington — Blair, Esq. — Lushington, Esq. — Southeron, Esq. 77 Lady Harrowby Lady Cornwall Hon. Dudley Rider, Esq. W. Mills, Esq. 76 Lady Archer Miss West Charles Sheldon, Esq. Harvey Aston, Esq.

THE KING'S SIDE.	FOURTH ROW.	THE PRINCE'S SIDE.
Q.		M.
H.		
100 Mrs. Robinson Ditto Mad. D'Ambly Ditto		D. Mrs. Johnson Ditto Ditto Ditto
99 Mrs. Courtney Ditto Ditto Ditto		89 Mrs. Cosway Lady Littleton Count Zenobi Baron D'Alvensleben
98 Miss Judd H. Penton, Esq. William Churchill, Esq. W. Northey, Esq.		90 J. Campbell, Esq. Ditto Ditto Ditto
97 Mrs. Benwell Ditto Col. Fitzpatrick Ditto		91 Mrs. Hill Ditto Ditto Ditto
96 Rd. Thomson Ditto Ditto Ditto		92 Madam Du Thé Ditto W. Lee, Esq. Ditto
95 Mrs. Smith Ditto J. Symonds, Esq. Ditto		93 — Johnson, Esq. Ditto Ditto Ditto
U. Earl Cholmondely Ditto Madame St. Albans Ditto		94 Mrs. Gowland Ditto Ditto Ditto
T.		R. Mrs. Thornhill Ditto Ditto Ditto
		S.

No. II.

License of the King's Theatre for a Season.

I DO hereby give leave and license unto Mr. John Ebers to have Italian Operas and Ballets of Action performed at the King's Theatre, in St. James's, Haymarket, within the Liberties of Westminster, from the date hereof to the 29th day of September next; and do not allow any other species of entertainments whatever to be exhibited there without application, specifying the nature of such entertainments, being previously made, and permission obtained from me for that purpose.

Given under my hand and seal, this 9th day of February, 1821, in the Second Year of His Majesty's reign.

INGRAM HERTFORD,
Chamberlain.

No. III.

License granted for the Performance of a New Opera.

18th November, 1826.

IT having been represented to me, by the Examiner of all Theatrical Entertainments, that a Manuscript, entitled "La Vestale," being an Opera in Three Acts, and in the Italian language, does not contain in it anything immoral, or otherwise improper for the Stage, I, the Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household, do, by virtue of my office, and in pursuance of the Act of Parliament in that case provided, allow the said Manuscript to be performed at your Theatre, without any variation whatsoever, unless such variation be likewise approved of by me in due form.

MONTROSE.

*To the Manager,**The King's Theatre,**Haymarket.*

No. IV.

*Agreement between the French Administration and
Mr. Ebers.*

Entre les Soussignés—

Le Sieur Duplantys, Administrateur de l'Académie Royale de Musique et de l'Opéra Italien, stipulant au nom et d'après les ordres de Monsieur le Vicomte de la Rochefoucault, aide-de-camp du Roi, chargé du département des Beaux Arts, aux Ministère de la Maison du Roi—

Et le Sieur Ebers, directeur du Théâtre du Roi, à Londres—

Est convenu ce qui suit :

L'Administration du Théâtre de l'Académie Royale de Musique, voulant faciliter à l'administration du Théâtre de Londres les moyens de faire connoître les artistes François de la Danse, sans que cet avantage soit préjudiciable à l'Opéra de Paris,

Consent à accorder au Sieur Ebers pour chaque saison, commençant l'une le dix Janvier, pour finir le 20 Avril, l'autre le 20 Avril, pour finir le 1^{er} Aout, deux sujets premiers de la danse, deux figurants et deux figurantes ; mais, en faisant cette concession, l'Administration de l'Académie Royale de Musique conserve le droit de ne laisser partir que les sujets, auxquels il lui conviendra de donner un congé ; il en sera de même pour les figurants et figurantes. Tous ne pourront quitter le Théâtre de Paris, qu'après une adhésion bien formelle de l'autorité.

Et pour prix de ces concessions, le Sieur Ebers promet de

n'engager aucun sujet que ceux pour lesquels il aura un consentement, d'après sa demande.

Il engage à ne pouvoir, sous aucun prétexte, garder les sujets et figurants et figurantes, un plus long laps de temps convenu, sans une permission nouvelle, et surtout à ne pouvoir, par des offres quelconques, les soustraire pour toujours à leurs engagements vis à vis de l'autorité Française.

Le present traité est fait pour l'espace de

Faute par le Sieur Ebers de manquer à un des articles du dit traité, il en résultera nullité complete du présent.

Fait double entre nous à Paris le, &c.



No. V.

Madame Pasta's Engagement for 1826.

Entre les soussignés Mr. JOHN EBERS, Entrepreneur et Administrateur du Théâtre du Roi à Londres, et Madame PASTA, Artiste, il est convenu ce qui suit, savoir :

ART. 1°. Que Madame Pasta s'engage en qualité de *Prima Donna assoluta* et de *Musicò assoluto*, pour chanter et jouer l'opéra seria au Théâtre du Roi à Londres pendant trois mois et demi, depuis le 15 Avril au 31 Juillet, 1826.

2°. Mr. Ebers payera ou fera payer à Madame Pasta, deux mille trois cents livres sterling (2300) de la manière suivante, 500*l.* à Paris le 12 Avril, 500*l.* à Londres le 22 Avril, et mille et trois cents livres sterling à Londres avant son début. Mr. Ebers n'aura pas le droit de faire débiter Madame Pasta, qu'après lui avoir payé les susdites 2300*l.*, et Madame Pasta, arrivée une fois à Londres et prête à remplir ses obligations, ne pourra dans aucun cas pour évènements indépendans de sa volonté, être tenue à la restitution des 1000*l.* qu'elle aura touché à Paris et à Londres. Si le 1000*l.* ne lui était pas payées le dit 22 Avril, elle aura toujours droit à les réclamer pour dédommagement des pertes que lui aurait cause le congé reçu à Paris, et elle pourra ensuite, à cause des payemens non accomplis à Paris et à Londres résilier son engagement.

3°. Dans tous les opéras où jouera Madame Pasta elle aura toujours le choix des rôles de son double emploi.

4°. Madame Pasta ne pourra être obligée à chanter et à jouer plus que six fois dans un mois (30 jours). Elle ne

sera pas obligée non plus à chanter ni dans les concerts qu'on pourrait donner au King's Théâtre, ni dans les opéras de bénéfice, excepté un bénéfice que lui demandera Mr. Ebers.

5°. Madame Pasta ne sera obligée de chanter pendant la durée de son engagement que dans les opéras suivants : *Tancredi, Romeo, Otello, Semiramide, Rosa bianca e rossa, Nina*, et *Medea* ; Mr. J. Ebers s'engage à monter tous les dits opéras si Madame Pasta le juge nécessaire.

6°. Dans tous les opéras où jouera Madame Pasta, ce sera elle seule qui aura le choix des acteurs, la distribution des rôles, la direction absolue pour tout ce qui regarde les répétitions et tout autre pour la mise en scene des dits opéras. Personne n'aura le droit d'intervenir aux répétitions, ni de s'immiscer en rien pour la représentation de ces opéras ; bien entendu que Madame Pasta respectera le rang des acteurs.

7°. En outre des opéras sus-mentionnés, Madame Pasta consent à jouer dans un opéra nouveau qui sera composé exprès pour le dit Théâtre du Roi, à condition pourtant qu'elle doit être entièrement contente de son rôle, autrement elle ne sera pas obligée d'y chanter.

8°. Il sera accordé à Madame Pasta un bénéfice, *tous les frais de toute espèce* à la charge de l'entreprise.

9°. Madame Pasta aura le droit de choisir un jeudi du mois de Juin pour le susdit bénéfice : Elle aura pour cette occasion la première représentation d'un nouvel opéra qu'elle choisira, et qui pourra être un autre que ceux indiqués dans l'article 8°. Madame Pasta indiquera à Mr. Ebers, au plus tard, le 10 Mai, quel opéra elle aura choisi pour l'occasion, afin qu'il ait le tems de faire les préparations nécessaires. Il est bien entendu et convenu

que toutes les Loges, toute la Galerie, tout le Pit, enfin tout le Théâtre sera à la disposition de Madame Pasta le jour de son bénéfice; il n'y aura d'excepté que deux Loges des troisièmes, la Loge de l'entrepreneur et 8 billets de Pit. Si par la faute de l'entreprise le bénéfice n'aurait pas lieu avec l'opéras désigné par Madame Pasta, et dans le tems fixé par elle, il est entendu que Mr. J. Ebers se trouvera obligé par le fait même d'assurer le bénéfice de Madame Pasta en mille livres sterling (1000*l.*) Alors le surplus de la recette, s'il y en a, sera partagé également entre Madame Pasta et Mr. Ebers. Dans le cas où Madame Pasta aura son bénéfice à l'époque qu'elle aura fixé, alors tout argent reçu aux portes sera, le même soir, remis à l'agent nommé par Madame Pasta.

10°. Madame Pasta pourra profiter, si elle le veut, d'un congé de huit jours, et elle s'oblige de remplacer ensuite les représentations qu'elle aurait dû faire dans les huit jours.

11°. Pourvu qu'elle ne manque point à son service ordinaire et régulier pour le King's Theatre, Madame Pasta pourra chanter à sa volonté dans tous les concerts privés et publics, et partout ailleurs.

12°. Il sera mis à la disposition de Madame Pasta une Loge des troisièmes, pendant la durée de son engagement; en outre elle aura toutes les fois qu'elle jouera douze billets de Pit et douze de Galerie.

13°. Sur le choix de Madame Pasta, Mr. J. Ebers lui fera fournir tous les costumes nécessaires pour ses différens rôles.

14°. Mr. Ebers voulant prouver à Madame Pasta la loyauté de ses intentions, consent à ce que dans le cas

qu'une des conditions quelconques du présent engagement ne soit pas remplie fidèlement par la faute de l'administration du Théâtre du Roi, Madame Pasta pourra suspendre ses représentations et ne les reprendre que lorsque la condition contestée aura été remplie. Mr. Ebers n'aura pas le droit dans ce cas d'exiger de Madame Pasta de remplacer les représentations qu'elle n'aurait pas faites pendant la contestation.

15°. Dans le cas de la clôture du Théâtre du Roi par suite ou cause d'événemens majeurs, il est convenu que pour la durée de la dite clôture, Madame Pasta ne sera tenue qu'à la restitution de la moitié de la somme qu'elle aurait dû garder *pro rata* après cet événement : ce seul cas excepté, Madame Pasta ne sera jamais obligée à restitution.

16°. Madame Pasta s'engage à se trouver à Londres, du 18 au 21 Avril, 1826.

Fait à Paris, ce 10 Avril, 1826.

Temoin,

GIUDITTA PASTA.

EDWARD THOMAS ALLAN,

Secrétaire de l'Opéra.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München



MALIBRAN.

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No.

Statement of the Principal Engagements of Performers in
Period of

OPERA.							
	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Albert, Mad.	160	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ambrogetti, Sig.	600	350	...	...	...	...	...
Angrisani, Sig.	600	550	...	...	...	...	...
Ayton, Miss	...	...	...	...	...	...	500
Begrez, Sig.	100	400	...	...	366	...	...
Benetti, Sig.	...	...	...	500	...	...	...
Biagioli, Mad.	...	...	...	200	...	...	300
Bonini, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	1700	...
Borgondio, Mad.	...	...	400	...	...	...	...
Brambilla, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	...	350
Brizzi, Mad.	...	...	...	...	...	...	400
Camporese, Mad.	1650	1550	1920	...	...	...	...
Caradori, Mad.	...	300	400	500	400	700	1200
Cartoni, Sig.	...	700	...	...	...	...	...
Castelli, Mad.	...	...	...	...	250	300	...
Cerutti, Sig.	...	150	...	...	...	...	...
Cinti, Mlle.	...	500	...	...	...	...	...
Clerini, Mlle.	...	...	150	...	...	...	...
Colbran Rossini, Mad. .	...	...	...	1500	...	...	...
Cornega, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	500	200
Crevelli, Mad.	...	...	...	...	133	...	...
Curioni, Sig.	600	900	900	800	700	1300	1450
De'Angeli, M. and Mlle. .	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
De Begnis, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	800	800
De Begnis, Sig. and Mad. .	1200	1800	1900	2200	1300	..	...
De Ville, Sig. Paolo . .	300	...	...	...	...	...	...

* It may be proper to observe, that many of the engagements, as has
This will account for the disproportion of the amounts paid in several

VI.

the Opera and Ballet at the King's Theatre during the
1821—1827.*

BALLET.

	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Aimée, Mlle.	...	...	240	...	...	...	...
Albert, M.	1785	1200	...	1000	...	...	...
Anatole, M. and Mad. . .	...	1300	965	...	...	...	...
Angelica, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	...	80
Armande, M.	...	...	250	...	...	...	...
Aumer, M.	...	...	675	1000	466	...	...
Aumer, Mlle.	...	...	...	600	333	...	...
Aurelié, Mlle.	...	...	450	...	...	...	...
Barré, M.	...	450	...	...	...	...	...
Bertrand, Mad.	...	140	55	...	40	...	...
Bias, Mlle.	675	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blazis, M.	...	...	...	...	...	...	700
Brissac, M.	...	80	...	...	...	...	...
Brocard, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	1150	1200
Buron, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	...	500
Coulon, M.	624	...	1350	...	...	1350	...
Copère, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	150	200
De Varennes, Mlle. . . .	300	500	700	...	...	...	...
Delâtre, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	166	...
Falcoz, M. and Mad. . .	...	...	600	...	...	...	...
Faucher, M.	...	...	105	...	...	...	...
Farey, Mlle.	187	...	...	...	...	...	...
Felicia, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	60	...
Ferdinand, M.	...	...	...	700	...	...	...
Fleurot, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	700	600
Genevaux, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	150	...

been shown in the course of this work, were for part only of a season.
instances to the same performers in different years.

OPERA.							
	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
De Ville, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	200	200
Di Giovanni, Sig.	127	180	180	...	120	100	75
Destri, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	300	...
Franceschi, Sig.	...	...	...	200	...	...	...
Galli, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	...	870
Garcia, Sig.	...	...	260	1000	1250	...	...
Garcia, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	500	...	...
Giovanola, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	110	300
Giubelei, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	...	100
Graziani, Mlle.	...	200	150	200	...	...	...
Marinoni, Mad.	150	...	...	...	...	...	...
Morandi, Sig.	84	84	...	...	...	...	...
Mori, Mlle.	300	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pasta, Mad.	...	...	...	1400	1000	2300	2365
Pellegrini, Sig.	...	...	...	...	...	550	...
Placci, Sig.	449	600	600	200	...	500	...
Porto, Sig.	...	...	800	700	533	800	...
Reina, Sig.	...	...	650	...	...	...	...
Remorini, Sig.	...	...	...	700	1100	...	...
Romero, Sig.	410	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rossichi, Sig.	...	...	...	250	...	...	...
Rubbi, Sig.	...	...	...	...	100	275	120
Torri, Sig.	500	...	...	...	...	500	350
Toso, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	...	350
Velluti, Sig.	...	...	...	...	600	2300	...
Vestris, Mad.	655	...	700	600	466	...	150
Zuchelli, Sig.	...	500	...	...	...	...	1130

ment, &c., continued.]

BALLET.							
	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Gosse, Mlle.	125	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gosselin, M.	...	100	160	...	...	...	700
Guillet, M.	...	...	...	400	...	...	...
Hullin, M.	199	250	...	...	...	...	...
Idalise, Mlle.	...	...	...	600	...	...	...
Joly, M.	20	...	...	...	...	...	...
Jolie, Mlle.	...	...	160	...	...	...	...
Lacombe, Mlle.	240	..	...	...	...	...	...
Le Blond, M.	262	450	...	600	333	...	...
Le Blond, M. and Mad. .	...	...	...	...	...	800	...
Le Febvre, Mlle.	340	...	...	...	...	...	...
Le Gros, Mlle.	...	...	...	1200	600	...	...
La Vasseur, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	150	...
Mejanel, Mlle.	112	...	...	...	...	...	...
Melanie, Mlle.	475	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mengin, Mlle.	350	...	...	..	...	...	...
Merante, M. and Mlle. . .	...	...	...	...	...	...	300
Mercandotti, Mlle.	...	800	200	...	...	...	...
Montessu, M.	430	...	...	...	...	...	...
Narcisse, Mlle.	137	..	...	...	...	...	...
Noblet, Mlle.	1537	675	...	800	...	...	...
Obrien, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	...	80
Olivier, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	150	100
Paul, M.	...	1200	...	...	...	...	...
Pauline, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	400	...
Perceval, Mlle.	...	225	...	...	...	...	200
Roland, Mlle.	...	425	...	...	..	...	...
Rosalie, Mlle.	...	...	...	...	...	166	...
Spitalier, Mlle.	...	245	...	...	...	...	...
Théodore, M.	...	...	...	...	...	450	...
Toussaint, Mlle.	200	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vestris, M. Chas., and Mad.	...	1200	1800	1900	1200	...	...
Vestris, M.	...	...	...	...	...	...	200
Venafra, M.	...	...	...	300	40	...	...
Volet, Mlle.	...	280	...	...	...	...	...

Ebers, John

Seven years of the King's Theatre

London 1828

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